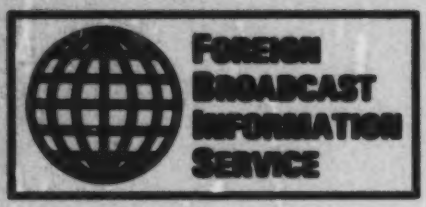

Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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FBIS-NES-95-232
Monday
4 December 1995

Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-95-232 *4 December 1995*

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Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab League Chief on Peace Process, Libya

NC0312215695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2055 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Dec (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has said that there is no obstacle to cooperation with Israel, but only after achieving a just and comprehensive, not a crippled, peace.

In an interview in AL-AHRAM's Monday [4 December] issue, he said that in the past Israel did not seek peace and the Arab countries were not ready to accept Israel's conditions for peace. Today, he added, an important development has taken place, but the peace process still has protracted and difficult phases ahead.

Commenting on some people's fear of Israel's economic domination, he said: I do not think that 5 million Israelis, no matter how advanced in science and technology, can control 240 million Arabs. First we should trust ourselves, be assured that we have potential, and that when we join together we stand as one. We should use opportunities and be wary of dangers.

'Abd-al-Majid pointed out that the Barcelona conference was the beginning of a long road and a good start. He said he welcomes cooperation between Arab and non-Arab Mediterranean countries because this in itself is a new form of international relations that is in line with the developments we are witnessing now.

The Arab League secretary general said he is contemplating organizing a seminar or grouping of the Arab world to discuss the post-Barcelona conference situation. The aim, he said, is to discuss at the League the concept of future Arab-Mediterranean ties and to brief our brothers in non-Mediterranean Arab countries on what happened in Barcelona.

He emphasized that Libya's absence from the Barcelona conference was an anomalous situation and said we declared our regret over Libya's absence. He demanded that Libya join this grouping as soon as possible.

Islamic Affairs

OIC Figure Urges International Help for PA

LD0112155495 Rabat MAP in English 1230 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New York, Dec. 1 (MAP) — Moroccan Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Abdellatif Filali called on the international community to carry on its assistance to the Palestinian Authority [PA] to help it 'construct a Palestinian independent state with al-Quds al-Sharif [Jerusalem] as capital'.

The call was made in a message to the committee for the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people on the occasion of the celebration of the international day for solidarity with the Palestinian people.

Filali made the call in his capacity as chairman of the 22nd conference of foreign ministers of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). He recalled the creation of the OIC after the arson of the al-Aqsa mosque 25 years ago saying 'OIC member states have been defending the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people' and 'the holy sites of Islam'.

The message was read out before the committee by Moroccan permanent representative to the UNO, Ambassador Ahmed Snoussi.

The solidarity day is celebrated every year in accordance with resolution 32/40 b endorsed in 1977 by the UN General Assembly.

Palestinian Affairs

Islamic Jihad's Shallah on U.S. 'Escalation'

MM0112143295 London FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH in Arabic Dec 95 pp 6, 7

[Interview with Dr. Ramadan 'Abdallah Shallah, secretary general of the Islamic Jihad Movement, by Yasir al-Za'atirah; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Za'atirah] The battle has assumed a new dimension with the assassination in Malta of martyr Fathi al-Shaqaqi and the arrest in New York of Musa Abu-Marzuq, the two most important figures in Hamas and the Islamic Jihad Movement [IJM]. What, in your view, are the implications of that in the light of the current political situation in the region?

[Shallah] The decision to assassinate the martyred leader Dr. Fathi al-Shaqaqi was a Zionist decision carried out by the Zionist Mosad, and the decision to arrest the brother mujahid Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq was also a Zionist decision but it was implemented by the U.S. Administration which is the most Zionist administration in the history of the United States.

It is clear that, against the background of a campaign by the Zionist propaganda trumpets in the United States and the West against an imaginary danger called "Islamic fundamentalism," the U.S. Government has decided to wage a vicious war against Islamists in the region, and Palestine in particular. That U.S.-Israeli escalation is, in my view, a risk with uncalculable consequences because it is based on an erroneous reading of the region and

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its vital forces, capabilities, and latent energies which could explode and come alight at any moment. That escalation will raise tension in the region and bring it to the threshold of a dangerous phase fraught with surprises that no one can foresee.

[Al-Za'atirah] How do you view the Arab and Islamic reactions to the assassination of martyr al-Shaqaqi?

[Shallah] The deluge of masses who attended the funeral of martyr Abu-Ibrahim [al-Shaqaqi] in Damascus and the Arab and Islamic popular reactions everywhere confirmed that, regardless of the brainwashing attempts, our nation's masses still favor martyrdom. It has also become clear that a wide gap separates our masses and our nation, who mourned martyr Dr. al-Shaqaqi, from their rulers who mourned his murderer, the deceased Rabin.

[Al-Za'atirah] The movement and you yourself have issued statements threatening to retaliate in all possible and available places. Does that indicate a change in the movement's strategy of confining armed action to the occupied territories?

[Shallah] The movement's strategy has always been to confine armed actions against the Zionist enemy to Palestine. The question about strategy should really be addressed to the enemy leaders. What did they expect when they decided to assassinate Dr. al-Shaqaqi, an unarmed foreign civilian on the streets of Malta?

[Al-Za'atirah] Before the assassination of martyr al-Shaqaqi, was there an inclination in the movement not to carry out any armed activity in the Gaza Strip, in order to avoid confrontation with the [Palestinian] Authority [PA]? And what about after the redeployment in the West Bank?

[Shallah] There was no political decision in the movement to operate in a certain area and exclude another. The issue is primarily a technical one subject to the assessment of the mujahidin on the ground in identifying their targets, determining their importance, and then directing their resources and actions accordingly.

[Al-Za'atirah] How do you view the Oslo-2 agreement and how do you view the Authority's view of that agreement as a new triumph for it confirming that the Gaza-Jericho agreement was the first step and not the last, as some oppositionists claimed?

[Shallah] Oslo-2 is the worst. It has exposed the shortcomings of all previous agreements. It divides the West Bank into isolated cantons and it maintains the separation of the West Bank from the Gaza Strip, with all the cultural, social, economic, and political risks involved. The prisoners and detainees have not been released, not even three female prisoners. The so- called redeployment is in fact a reorganization and a repositioning of the occupation forces. The agreement confirmed the settlement [of Israelis] in Hebron and the other areas and it opened the way for the final annexation of Jerusalem with the blessing of the United States. Furthermore, under Oslo-1 and Oslo-2, the occupation has sovereignty over territory, water resources, the economy, and routes of communication, in addition to the direct Israeli control of and hegemony over the self-rule Authority which cannot decide anything related to people's lives without first checking with the occupation authorities.

If we have to talk about the agreement as an achievement then we have to say that it is an "Israeli achievement" in the full sense of the word, especially the security aspect. Israel expects the PA and its repressive organs to play the same role in the West Bank as it has played in the Gaza Strip in hunting, pursuing, and repressing the mujahidin to prevent them from carrying out any military action against Israeli targets. That is the most important reason which persuaded Israel to redeploy after long procrastination.

[Al-Za'atirah] Does the movement have any inclination to engage in political activity in the framework of the PA, as a political party or anything else?

[Shallah] The IJM, as repeatedly stressed by its martyred leader and its statements, will not be part of any PA framework stemming from the Oslo agreements. It refuses to participate in the self-government elections because any dealing with the PA and its institutions would mean giving legitimacy to that Authority and the Oslo agreement which created it. That is against the IJM's principles and policy.

[Al-Za'atirah] What if the settlement was completed on all tracks and the self-rule remained without a state or was linked to Jordan under some formula? Where would armed action be in that equation?

[Shallah] Whatever the situation, armed jihad will remain the only way to salvation and restoration of all the usurped rights. As regards the time, place, nature, and scope of action, that is a technical matter subject to the assessment and circumstances of the mujahidin.

[Al-Za'atirah] You were, to some extent, distant from the detailed affairs of the movement, as you were engaged in intellectual and academic work. Will that affect your new position?

[Shallah] Many brothers, friends, and observers see that as an advantage and a positive point in more ways than one. I hope and pray to God that that is so.

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[Al-Za'atirah] How did you view the threats of the now dead Rabin to assassinate you? And how do you assess his assassination and its internal and external repercussions?

[Shallah] The martyred leader Abu-Ibrahim used to recall the words of Imam 'Ali, God's blessings be upon him, that "the guard of life is death." I have learned from the martyr's life and death how to die in order to live.

As regards the assassination of Rabin, to us Muslims it was a divine revenge and a divine message for the mujahidin that "I am with you; give firmness to the believers; I will instill terror into the hearts of the unbelievers. Smite you above their necks and smite all their finger tips off them." [Koranic verse]

With the killing of Rabin, the Zionist entity reaped the terrorism it had sown in the minds and hearts of its people and settlers. The assassination reflects a real crisis in the Zionist entity, which has built itself on myths, legends, and fables backed up with spears, repression, and terrorism. The repercussions of that crisis will fly in all directions but the talk of possible Zionist civil war by some is exaggerated and denotes an erroneous reading of the nature of Zionist society and its political system.

[Al-Za'atirah] The American authorities have frozen two of your accounts in American banks. What is the story behind the two accounts and how do you view Washington's tackling of the Palestinian question and issues of the region?

[Shallah] One of the two accounts is a personal account in my name and had $200 in it. The other is the account of the "Islamic and World Studies Center" which I used to manage in the United States. It had $15,000. As I said in the beginning, the current U.S. Administration is the worst and the most Zionist in the history of the United States.... Under it the Jewish and Zionist influence is no longer confined to infiltration of companies, banks, and the media. In an unprecedented manner, the Jews now sit in the White House and in the center of decisionmaking.... That explains the U.S. escalation against the Islamic movements, with the arrest of the mujahid Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd- al-Rahman and the brother mujahid Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq, and also against the Palestinian people and their cause. The so-called antiterrorism bill submitted to Congress is the fruit of the Judaization of the current U.S. Administration. The decision to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem, which means recognizing it as Israel's eternal capital, is the latest feat of the U.S. policy in the region, which is known to use double standards as the essence of the U.S. world order and the basis of the U.S.-Israeli settlement imposed on the region with the stick of U.S.-Israeli terrorism. That will not serve the peace process they are crying about nor will it serve the region's stability in any way.

[Al-Za'atirah] In the light of what is taking place around us, how does Dr. Ramadan 'Abdallah view the future?

[Shallah] In the short term there will, regrettably, be an increase in the rush toward the Zionist entity by some governments and regimes in the region. That will only increase the people's discontent.

In the long run, I am convinced that the false and feeble peace concluded by rulers will not last. The people are not convinced of it and they believe in the inevitability of confrontation. That will underscore Israel's attitude in the next phase and its attempts to control all the nation's political, economic, and security affairs.

I am optimistic...and I believe that the nation, with its latent resources and capabilities, is bound to rise from its slumber.... I do not have the slightest doubt that the future belongs to Islam and, even in the view of many Westerners, the 21st century is the century of Islam not only at the regional level but also at the world level.

U.S. Not To Extradite Hamas Leader to Israel

JN0412112295 Amman AL-MAJD in Arabic 4 Dec 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq, head of the Political Bureau of Hamas [Islamic Resistance] Movement, who is currently detained in New York, will appear in court next Wednesday [December 6] to discuss his lawyer Stanley Cohen's request for his release on bail. The bail will be paid by a donor in light of the deteriorating health condition of Dr. Abu-Marzuq.

The court will review the defense plea presented by Cohen in response to a request by the Israeli Government for the extradition of Abu-Marzuq to stand trial in Israel.

Brigadier General Mahmud Abu-Marzuq, commander of the Civil Defense in Gaza and brother of Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq, said that Yasir 'Arafat told him, quoting U.S. envoy Dennis Ross, that Washington is not considering extraditing Musa Abu-Marzuq to Israel.

Brigadier General Abu-Marzuq visited Amman twice recently and met with [Hamas representative in Amman] Muhammad Nazzal and lawyer Anis Fawzi al-Qasim, who was appointed by Hamas to follow up Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq's case. Al-Qasim is expected to travel to New York to contribute to lawyer Cohen's defense of the head of the Hamas Political Bureau.

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'Arafat Receives Israeli Meretz Delegation in Gaza

JN0112155095 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 1 Dec 95

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] With the participation of President Yasir 'Arafat, the Palestine National Council [PNC] members present here will hold a meeting at the Legislative Council's headquarters in Gaza this evening.

Acting PNC Speaker Salim al-Za'nun, also known as Abu-al-Adib, said that the meeting will address a number of issues, including the Legislative Elections law.

In a statement to the Voice of Palestine, Abu-al-Adib added that the participants will be briefed on a PNC report on the conditions of the Palestinians expelled from Libya, as well as a report on the U.S. Congress decision to transfer the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Al-Za'nun said this decision is very serious.

Abu-al-Adib pointed out that at least 80 PNC members will attend the meeting. He said that the PNC invited the National Authority members and a number of observers to attend the meeting. He added that a PNC representative will attend the cabinet's meeting on Saturday to work out the final formula of the Legislative Elections law.

In another development, President 'Arafat received at the Presidency in Gaza this afternoon a large delegation representing the Israeli Meretz Movement which supports peace. The delegation was led by Knesset members (Tomy Hazan) and (Anat Ma'or).

President 'Arafat lauded the role Meretz is playing to achieve peace. He also hailed its position which supports the establishment of a Palestinian state.

For their part, the delegation members stressed their continued support for establishing an independent Palestinian state, and emphasized the need to fully implement the agreements signed by the Palestinian and Israeli sides.

'Arafat, Peres To Meet at Erez Crossing 8 Dec

JN0412065095 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 4 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat will meet with Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres at Erez crossing on Friday, 8 December. Both sides will discuss the implementation of the remaining articles of the Palestinian-Israeli accord, particularly redeployment, power transfer, and Palestinian prisoners in the Israeli occupation jails.

Account of al-Shaqaqi-al-Qadhdhafi Meeting

MM0112153795 London FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH in Arabic Dec 95 p 10

[Interview with Colonel Sa'id Musa, secretary of Fatah-the Uprising, by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] You accompanied the martyr [Islamic Jihad leader] Dr. Fathi al-Shaqaqi on his last trip to Libya. Could you tell us about his last moments and his meeting with al-Qadhdhafi?

[Abu-Musa] On 29 September, the Libyan leadership sent an invitation to the leaders of the Palestinian factions to meet with Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi. The brothers in Libya contacted Dr. Fathi al-Shaqaqi directly and told him about the invitation. He then contacted me and told me about it, before the Libyans contacted me. The invitation did not state why the Libyan leader wanted to meet with us.

I will not hide from you the fact that, at first, all the factions hesitated to accept the invitation, especially as I had returned on 23 September from Libya where I had been staying since 25 August, accompanied during this visit by brother Fadl Shurur from the [Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine] General Command [PFLP-GC].

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] What discussions took place during that period?

[Abu-Musa] During that time we had several meetings with Col. al-Qadhdhafi, during which we presented to him our views on the issue of the return [to Palestine] and told him that the principle of the idea was fine, that it was a legitimate right, and that we should continue to push our claim at international level and through all institutions and meetings, but that we should consider how to implement this view, because it needed a specific approach....

In Libya, there are no refugees, but there are Palestinian workers. Also Libya does not have a border with Palestine, and should there be an attempt to return, this would have to be via Egypt, which would object. Consequently, there would be an inter- Arab problem and not an Arab-Israeli problem or one with 'Arafat's Authority. However, we did not reach a consensus and the Colonel remained adamant in his view and in his resolve to expel the Palestinian workers, hence our hesitation when he invited us again.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] So how did you come to travel with Dr. al-Shaqaqi?

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[Abu-Musa] At the insistence of the brothers in Libya, brother Talal Naji [of the PFLP-GC] went first. I was in contact with him over the telephone for several days to try and find out the reasons for the invitation, but Col. al-Qadhdhafi did not see him, as he was waiting for the arrival of the other factions' leaders.... Dr. al-Shaqaqi traveled four days after Talal Naji's departure, and I joined them three days later. We traveled to Surt the following day to meet the [Libyan] leader. It was a friendly meeting which lasted four hours. We understood from the meeting that he wanted to know how to promote the idea of the return, which is the same subject that we had discussed previously with him. We reiterated the same view as before.... We did not agree on anything at that meeting.

The following day, we met with him again, and told him that the only solution would be to remove the camp on the al-Sallum border and then to think of a practical way to handle the issue and promote the idea of the return.... We told him that we had heard that he had promised Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa to remove the camp. He replied that he did not say this to 'Amr Musa but that he had talked to the Egyptian president who had requested a period of six months to solve the problem. We agreed to that and asked him to give President Mubarak this respite and to remove the camp so that the workers could return to their jobs, and then after the agreed period to ask President Mubarak what he has done.

The Libyan leader did not give his agreement on this but we felt that he was convinced, so we left Surt the following day and returned to Tripoli.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] Did leader al-Qadhdhafi ask you to visit the camp or to justify his positions?

[Abu-Musa] Honestly, let history be my witness, leader al- Qadhdhafi did not ask us to do that and asked nothing of us in this context. All he wanted to know was how to promote the idea of the return through dialogue....

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] Was there a disagreement between al-Shaqaqi and the Libyan leader?

[Abu-Musa] Not at all, there was no disagreement between them. It was a friendly discussion, and I tell you frankly that al-Qadhdhafi had a great deal of respect for al-Shaqaqi, and honestly, I would say that he preferred him to us and had hopes in him; he used to describe him as "an enlightened Islamist." He always viewed the Jihad Movement with great respect and always said that they were the mujahidin.... There was no disagreement. Until the last minute, he treated al-Shaqaqi with all the respect due to his position...

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] How was the trip?

[Abu-Musa] After our return to Tripoli, we heard that al-Qadhdhafi had held a press conference and given President Mubarak a six month respite. We were pleased about this and held a meeting in Tripoli with the revolutionary committees.

The following day we parted with Talal Naji and I stayed with Dr. al-Shaqaqi to attend to some business. We had lunch with Dr. Rif'at al-Sayyid Ahmad and had a long meeting, during which I heard al-Shaqaqi talk for the first time about his private life, how he went to university in Egypt and how he was arrested and how the movement was founded. He talked about his home and said that his heart and soul belonged to his daughter Khawlah, whom he should have named Zaynab, because he liked the Lady Zaynab, al-Husayn's sister. It was a friendly relaxed evening, unlike any of my previous meetings with al-Shaqaqi which were business meetings with an agenda...

We stayed up together and talked about the return journey, and he told me that he would return via Rome, Malta, and Damascus, which was the route he came; I asked him to travel with me via Tunis, but he preferred to return the way he came. It seems that fate had decided and what had to happen happened in Malta.

[FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH] What do you think about his martyrdom?

[Abu-Musa] What can I say about al-Shaqaqi...the man...the rebel...the mujahid.... As long ago as the first week of his departure from Palestine I went with brother Abu-Khalid al-'Imlah to meet with him in Beirut, and from the first meeting I was convinced that this person was genuine, in his feelings...his words...and his principles....

I say that we, in Fatah, saw in him and still see in the Islamic Jihad Movement the organization which is closest to our view of the concept of the struggle. He always said: "Let us put our disagreements aside and let Palestine be the ideology that we embrace.... And when it is free, let us disagree as much as we want."

That is why we think that he was a person of principles, and when I talk about him, I talk also about his organization.

Al-Shaqaqi was gentle.... Affectionate and close to our heart; the multitudes who attended his funeral did not know him but had heard about him, a man of great deeds in a short time.... Constants for him were constants.... That is why we say that his martyrdom was a loss.... As a man, he was a man of wisdom and experience and we are confident that the movement will be inspired by his history and blood to achieve more cohesion and will, God willing, follow his line.

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Cabinet, National, Islamic Forces Discuss Electoral Law

JN0212140295 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1230 GMT 2 Dec 95

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] Chaired by President Yasir 'Arafat, the National Authority's Cabinet meeting was concluded at the Presidential Office in Gaza a short while ago. Taking part in the meeting were members of the PLO Executive Committee who are present in Gaza and representatives of the National and Islamic political forces, who were selected during a meeting with President 'Arafat late last week. The participants agreed that the forthcoming Palestinian legislative elections should be held on their fixed date, 20 January.

Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation, said that participants in the meeting agreed that the elections should not be postponed. Sha'th described the meeting as extremely positive, noting that it discussed the means of ensuring the maximum degree of democracy and achieving national unity. He added that many proposals will be presented at a cabinet meeting scheduled for this evening. He said he hoped the cabinet would endorse the [electoral] law in its final form during the meeting.

Sha'th said that President 'Arafat's meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres will take place very soon. He said the upcoming 'Arafat-Peres meeting will focus on completing the implementation of the second stage of the Declaration of Principles agreement on redeployment and extending the National Authority to the remaining parts of the West Bank.

'Abdallah Hurani, member of the PLO Executive Committee, who took part in the meeting, said that the participants made some remarks regarding the electoral law. Hurani stressed the importance of the legislative elections for the Palestinian people, especially since they are the first of their kind.

Election Law Approved, To Be Published 'in 2 Days'

JN0312083095 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The cabinet approved the election law during its weekly session which was held under President Yasir 'Arafat's chairmanship last night. Secretary of the presidency, al- Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, said that the president reviewed observations on the draft law which were raised and discussed during the Palestine National Council meetings in both Ramallah and Gaza under the chairmanship of Salim al-Za'nun. 'Arafat also reviewed points that have been raised at popular meetings since the draft law was presented to the people for discussion and for their observations preparatory to approving it in its final form. 'Arafat said that the large-scale interest in the draft law confirms the desire of all forces and figures among our people to lay the foundations of democracy and political pluralism, and reassures all that they will participate in formulating the future and build the future institutions of our state. 'Arafat stressed that holding the legislative elections is a triumph of our people's national cause and their aims of freedom and self-determination.

'Abd-al-Rahim noted that having discussed all proposals and effected all amendments, the cabinet charged a legal committee headed by Mr. al-Za'nun to put the draft law in its final form. He said that 'Arafat praised the people's turnout in all areas to register their names and called on our people, especially in the Jerusalem constituency who have not registered to report to the registration offices, which will remain open to them, so that they may exercise their political rights. The president noted that the registration of our people in Jerusalem will not affect their political, economic, or social status.

Following the cabinet meeting, Justice Minister Furayh Abu-Middayn said that the cabinet has decided to refer the law to the Justice Ministry's legal committee and that the law will be published in its official and final form in two days.

PNC Members Meet in Gaza on Elections Law

JN0112211795 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1900 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The unofficial meeting of the Palestine National Council [PNC], attended by President Yasir 'Arafat, is now under way at the Legislative Council headquarters in Gaza.

Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, adviser to President Yasir 'Arafat, spoke to our radio on the issues being discussed at the meeting.

[Begin Abu-Rudaynah recording] The main objective of the meeting is to discuss the draft elections law on the basis of which the next legislative elections will be held.

As you know, this is the third meeting after the meeting of the PNC members held in Ramallah, and the second meeting that was held at the headquarters of President Abu-'Ammar ['Arafat] which was attended by all Palestinian organizations, factions, and personalities. That meeting formed a committee comprising 11 personalities from all organizations and patriotic figures. They will participate in the Palestinian National Authority's Cabinet meeting tomorrow along with the PLO Ex-

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ecutive Committee members who are present [in Gaza] to discuss the draft elections law that was presented to the committees which convened at the Palestinian Legislative Council in Gaza yesterday, last Wednesday, and today.

A democratic spirit prevails among all PNC members and other participants. They express their opinions concerning the best ways to complete the elections law on the basis of which the next elections will be held. Some members support the idea of constituencies, and others support the idea of percentage. Each of the two groups have a viewpoint. The legal committee of five members that worked out the draft law is still in a state of permanent session. All proposals will be presented tonight and tomorrow to the Cabinet for final endorsement. These proposals will make up the Palestinian elections law. There is a high sense of responsibility. All patriotic and Islamic factions participated in the meeting held at the headquarters of President Abu-'Ammar and also in the meeting tonight at the headquarters of the Palestinian Legislative Council in Gaza.

There are Palestinian ideas for a draft elections law which treats all citizens equally and which secures free, honest, and democratic elections, especially since we are experiencing the first occurrence of democratic elections on liberated Palestinian land. The meetings are continuing, and as I told you, the final and important meeting will be held tomorrow morning when the Palestinian Cabinet will convene under President Abu-'Ammar and will be attended by the present PLO Executive Committee members, as well as the 11 members who were elected in the committee meeting two days ago that was attended by all patriotic and Islamic factions. [end recording]

In addition to what Abu-Rudaynah said, our correspondent in Gaza 'Adil al-Za'nun provided us with the following dispatch a short while ago:

[Begin al-Za'nun recording] The PNC meeting is currently under way. The meeting was attended by President Yasir 'Arafat at the headquarters of the Legislative Council in Gaza this evening. 'Arafat said before the meeting that the PNC members will discuss in detail the recent measures. He said the meeting is completely unofficial.

Acting PNC Speaker Salim al-Za'nun, alias Abu-al-Adib, inaugurated the meeting. He stressed that this meeting is held under the umbrella of democracy embodied by the PNC in the diaspora throughout its march in which Palestinians offered thousands of martyrs and injured.

Abu-al-Adib added that the Palestinian people are still waiting for the release of 5,000 Palestinian prisoners so that their happiness will be completed. He stressed that the prisoners have the right more than anyone else to take part in the legislative elections. He said 80 PNC members are participating in this meeting, in addition to a number of National Authority members.

Before the meeting, Abu-al-Adib said that the draft law of the legislative elections would be discussed, and that the participants would present their remarks on the law.

For his part, Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation said the meeting is important, and added that the Legislative Council members who will be elected during the next elections will be PNC members. Sha'th said the participants will discuss the subject of adding other members so that the share of the Palestinian territories, which is 182 members, will be completed. [end recording]

Hamas Spokesman: Decision To Boycott Elections Final

NC0212191695 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 2 Dec 95

[Telephone interview with Hamas spokesman Ibrahim Ghawshah by 'Isam Hasan; place and date not given; from the "News and Reports" feature]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Hasan] Mr. Ghawshah, AFP has reported that a meeting was recently held to discuss the law governing the elections that the Oslo authority [Palestinian Authority, PA] plans to hold in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. AFP said that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] representatives attended the meeting. What information do you have on this report?

[Ghawshah] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. It is clear that the PA is eagerly trying to drag all Palestinian forces toward the pitfall of the Zionist elections. We call them Zionist elections because the Zionists are planning and administering them. The PA did not announce the names of the representatives of Hamas or other Palestinian factions who attended the meeting. These factions issued a joint statement several days ago saying that they will boycott the elections. It is illogical for a faction to refuse to participate in the elections and then agree to attend a meeting that discusses the law pertaining to the elections. It would be an obvious contradiction.

Apparently, however, 'Arafat's authority — so good at ensnaring people — has snared some individuals and labeled them Hamas members, such as 'Imad al-Faluji. It included al-Faluji in the Palestinian delegation that

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attended Amman's recent economic. It might also have ensnared other individuals from the other opposition factions. We believe that the PA has been using this ploy. Hamas has made a final, definite decision not to participate in the self-rule elections. Hence, all these reports are merely PA publicity stunts designed to create confusion among the Palestinian public and world public opinion.

[Hasan] Mr. Ghawshah, thank you.

Janin Closure To Be Lifted; Abduction Suspects Arrested

TA0312174295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The closure on Janin will be lifted and the town will be opened to Israeli traffic. This was agreed upon in a meeting between Major General Gabi Ofir and General al-Hajj Isma'il. General Isma'il reported that several more Palestinians involved in the abduction of two border policemen in Janin had been arrested and were now being interrogated. He promised that the Palestinian police woul? step up its activity in Janin.

Palestinian Force Enters Bethlehem After 'Delay'

JN0312155695 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The vanguards of the Palestinian Security Forces entered Bethlehem a short while ago. The officers of this group will assume their tasks at the Palestinian-Israeli liaison office in Bayt Jala. Colleague Sa'id 'Ayyad has more details:

[Begin recording] [Yusuf al-Mahmud] Good evening Sa'id.

['Ayyad] Good evening Yusuf. After a four-hour delay, the vanguards of the Palestinian liaison forces have just arrived at the headquarters prepared for this purpose in the city of Bayt Jala. Some 15 officers, led by Brigadier General Ziyad al-Atrash, in military vehicles, dressed in military uniform, and carrying their weapons, took their positions among the citizens who crowded in the area to receive them. On hand to receive them were several Palestinian figures led by Brigadier General Abu-Fahd al-Lahham, adviser to the president, in addition to representatives of the national institutions in the area. Right after the forces' arrival, the Palestinian flag was hoisted over the building. The scouts played the national anthem and other national music, and the Palestinian flags and the president's pictures decorated the adjacent squares. A rally is now being organized in front of the liaison office. Senior officers from both sides are currently holding a meeting. The Palestinian officers will coordinate with their Israeli counterparts to arrange for the redeployment of the occupation forces in the governorate. The National Authority will also assume seven more civilian powers in the city. The Israeli withdrawal from Bethlehem is scheduled to be completed on 18 December. [end recording]

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Algeria

Journalist, Driver Murdered in Algiers

LD0312101095 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0900 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A journalist at the LIBERTE daily and his driver were murdered last night. According to a statement issued by the security services today, Hamid Mahiout, a 45-year-old father of three who was a journalist at LIBERTE, and Ahmed Benkhelfallah, a 30-year-old driver, were stabbed to death at Sidi Kebir in the Rais Hamidou district of Algiers last night.

The security services said that the two victims were in a Dacia car on their way to Sidi Kebir where the journalist used to live. The security services' statement added that the security forces began searching for the two men when they were reported missing. Their bodies were found at 0700 this morning.

Large-Scale Search Follows Reported Attack

NC0212131095 Paris AFP in English 1228 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Algiers, Dec 2 (AFP) — Algerian security forces launched a major search operation at midday Saturday [2 December] in the center of the capital following a reported attack.

Paratroopers, backed up by light armored vehicles, had stopped traffic at some sites, notably in the Telemly residential district in downtown Algiers.

Witnesses on the scene said the security forces launched the operation after an unidentified man was killed by an armed commando. Residents said they heard several shots fired, but there were no immediate official details.

There has been a new upsurge in violence here after a lull during presidential elections last month, which was boycotted by the Islamic opposition and won by incumbent Liamine Zeroual.

On Thursday, Islamic fundamentalist gunmen killed two Latvian sailors here.

Over 100 'Terrorists' Accept Clemency Offer

LD0212133595 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Clemency is one of the noble tenets of the Muslim faith; I call upon all Algerians to show clemency toward the children of Algeria for the sake of the higher national interest. This was just one quote from the convincing speech made by the president of the republic on his inauguration. The national press has unanimously agreed that the speech put forward a number of positive ideas which might lead toward solving the crisis.

Less than a week after President Liamine Zeroual's inauguration, the clemency offer has borne fruits. Press reports say today, quoting information sources, that more than 500 repentant people have given themselves up to the security services since last April [as heard].

The daily El-Moudjahid reports that more than 100 repentant terrorists have given themselves up to the security forces since 16 November. The same sources indicates that a large number of terrorists are willing to give themselves up following the clemency offer made by the president of the republic.

Under the headline, Testimonies by repentant people; clemency is an opportunity, El-Moudjahid publishes a number of interviews with terrorists who have given themselves up. Their interviews are testimony to the hideous logic of terrorism. [passage omitted]

'Repentant People' Presented to Press

LD0312214895 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Thirty repentant people were presented to the national press at the sports palace of the second military district in Oran.

The repentant people's ages range between 16 and more than 50 years old. This number represents a sample of the total number of the repentant people who surrendered themselves to the security services in the west of the country.

Those people, who will benefit from the mercy measures, belonged to the Telagh group which used to be active in Tlemcen, Oran, Sidi Bel Abbes, Ain Temouchent, Saida, and El Bayadh.

The repentant people offered testimony on the circumstances of their recruitment into the ranks of the armed groups, and their stay in the camps.

They also admitted taking part in sabotage activities only, and setting fire to economic units, municipalities' headquarters, schools, and public utilities.

They also pointed out that they were misled and deceived by those who recruited them for goals they called jihad.

Those repentant people unanimously said they were surprised by the security services' warm reception.

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FIS European Supporters Issue Newsletter

MS0412100595 Southall THE ENLIGHTENMENT in English 29 Nov 95

[Newsletter "publicizing the Islamic Struggle in Algeria," published by Islamic Salvation Front "supporters" in Europe — quotation marks as received; received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text]

Editorial — The military soldier in Gen. Zeroual could not help to come back to the surface!

Praise be to Allah Who Says:"(Respite will be granted) Until, when the messengers give up hope (of their people) and (come to) think that they were treated as liars, there reaches them Our help, and those whom We will, are delivered into safety. But never will be warded off Our punishment from those Who are in sin." (Koran, Surat Yusuf,12:110, Translation:Yusuf Ali).

Everyone was waiting to hear what Gen. Zeroual had to say at the "sworn in ceremony" and how he was coping with what some taught of as "a new freedom offered to him by the majority of the Algerian people on the 16/11/95". The results was very disappointing for many and very enlightening for some about the type of "after-elections" situation to expect. As time went by, the suspense grew bigger and so did the expectation of people who were waiting as if saying to Gen. Zeroual "now you have had your magic stick on the 16/11/95, so make it happen, say you want peace for us and for the country!". But to the disappointment of many, Gen. Zeroual came out and basically said: "I have not changed, I am still the same "pre- 16/11/95" General!" and neither has the situation.

In his speech, he used the same old "eradicators" vocabulary on the same "la paix des braves" [the peace of the brave] old song! He describe the situation which he had promise during the elections to solve as a conflict between two sides, one who is and has always been right and the other, the bad one as "the terrorists, the criminals, the traitors, the mercenaries". At best, he call the wrong side of the conflict, paternalistically: "the mislead youth", thus joining his voice to the current "psychological war" against the Mujahedeen. So there is no compromise, one side is white, his and his friends', and the other is black. If there is no compromise in solving a conflict, there is no peace. The only options left are endless war or a "total military victory" of one side over the other. Does a "military victory" has a meaning in this type of guerrilla war particularly when the barrel of oil is not at $40 anymore? For the Junta to have a total military victory, it needs to "take the water from the sea in order to kill the fish". It will in the future, know how impossible the task is for those who do not bother to read History!

If Gen. Zeroual is to be taken at the face value of his words, the Algerian people have to wake up, and the sooner the better, from the dream induced by the General's electoral campaign, and face the hard fact that war is to stay much longer than estimated. Some may argue rightly that Gen. Zeroual has to talk that kind of language not to "upset" the powerful "eradicator" clan in the army. And this situation is even worst as it brings back the question of: "in which hands, the real power rests?" and "what is the value of a "popular verdict"?" or even "do the "eradicators" react in accordance with the same publicly announced results or do they have their own?".

It is not a secret that since twelve months exactly, Lt-General Lamari known as the head of the "eradicators" clan, was not only promoted but also given other prerogatives besides his position as the chief of staff. To carry on the military plan of "eradication," he was given "power of attorney" for the position of Minister of defense. In other world he could decide, sign and basically "be" the defense minister. On the top of that and despite the official army organisation, Lt-General Lamari had the "counter intelligence" of the Junta secret police "La S.M" which is under the leadership of another Lamari (this one is just a General), related directly to him and accountable to him only. This service is the "dirty jobs" executer. Some of its actions are apparently not even known to its official hierarchy officer Gen. Mediene the head of the Junta secret police. In conclusion it seems that the "eradicators" clan is in fact a "State within a State" and Gen. Zeroual with or without "all the Algerian people support" will always weight the same. He may looks as a president taking decisions and policy but his real role will always be that of an executor of decisions which he may or may not have participated in taking them. His problem seems paradoxically, to be a lack of recognition from the military Nomenklatura itself rather than by the political opposition. And this is the dangerous and dark side of the Algerian establishment of which the Algeria people can be invited to vote but will never known for sure on which hands the authority is resting and how small the popular voice is in the power distribution of the regime. It is this double faced situation which has revolted the FIS jailed leaders to demand a "transparent" dialogue in the presence of media because they only recognise the authority of the Algerian people after that of Allah.

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Echoes of the press: The real power structure in Algeria and the concept of "a State within a State"!

Following is an analysis made by the Journalist Jose Garcon from the French newspaper "LIBERATION" and which was published on the 16/11/95 issue under the title: "The army, immovable master of the political game!" and with a subtitle saying: "Since independence, the military men have always controlled the political power from the shadow." Following is the translation of the article: "I am not a candidate of "the system", nor of the army. I am an independent", said in his electoral campaign, General Liamine Zeroual, who is the candidate to his own succession to the presidency. Despite the declaration which says a lot about the necessity of taking one's distances from the regime in order to be credible, Algeria prepares itself to consecrate a military man at the head of the state once more. For Liamine Zeroual, to be 54 and a retired General for the last six years does not contradict a constance that the civilian presidency of Ahmed Ben Bella and Mohamed Boudiaf could not revise: the real power (establishment), is the army. It is indeed the only obvious aspect of a system characterised by opacity.

During years, it (the establishment) managed to hide behind a meticulously constructed self-image. Inside the country (Algeria), the oil revenue allowed it to buy the social peace for nearly two decades. Outside, Algiers imposed itself, with the help of a brilliant diplomacy, as the ""lighthouse" country of the third world", before offering its good services to terrorist affairs. The appropriation of the independence war by the "Temple", will take care in diabolizing in advance, any internal plea for protestation and to render guilty any question from "the friends of Algeria" (les amies de l'Algerie): to contest the establishment will amount to questioning the revolution if not the independence itself.

The system nevertheless looked like a theatre of shadows where the apparent actors are not the real "decision makers". Yesterday, it was the "hierarchy" of the FLN [National Liberation Front], the unique party confined to political administrative assignments, while its "organisations of masses" controlled the society. Today, it is a government of which Paris has said having testing the "decorum role" (feuille de vigne) during the taking of hostages of the Air France Airbus. This situation worries the French authorities enough to find it necessary to "identify, or even to talk directly" to the "real establishment". This task is hard given the moving contours of a system which rests on a handful of key-Generals: Nezzar, without an official function, but always powerful because he is the guarantor of the equilibrium between the clans, Mediene, Smain (Lamari),(Mohamed) Lamari, Zeroual and Betchine mainly, most of the time related to powerful businessmen unknown to the public. Its (the establishment) organisation is also difficult to assess because it is based on clans which, for the essential, do not come under ideological cleavages. These clans get formed and dismantled in function of forces equilibrium, regional or interests solidarity, marriages or personnel relationship and complex and obscure allegiance.

In this system, where the President is neither in the establishment nor independent, the important decisions are endorsed during regular "conclaves" of the army which operates by consensus. This permits to this institution to preserve a "cosmetic cohesion". The designation of Liamine Zeroual as candidate for the presidency despite the little enthusiasm of the chief of staff, General Lamari, is a good example.

We know less in terms of how the decisions are taken. One thing is for sure is that General Mediene, known as Tewfik, chief of the DRS (department of intelligence and security), the new label for the political police of the regime, the powerful SM (securite militaire), has a lot of cards. He indeed, orients the final opinion, on the basis of data which he has concerning the situation in the country and in the army itself. A true state within the state, controlling an important part of the external trade, la SM is today the only institution that functions despite rivalry between its different services. " Each time, serious movements tend to be formed, the political polices which reside at the shadow of the establishment, intervene brutally, in a climate of general insecurity, suppressing any appeal and eliminating from the social field managers of value." says the ex-finance minister, Ghazi Hidouci (in L'Algerie, "la liberation inachevee" Editions La Decouverte, 1995). "The instrumentation of the public opinion is simple: it only needs that each time a real resistance is manifested, to point out to a hidden enemy or a pervert devil in order to silence any possibility of discussion or arbitration." (see Gen. Zeroual speech of the 27/11/95 for a study case of this "theorem"). More than anything else , the atrocity comited by armed groups come to legitimate the myth of "good despot" or of "the less evil". To a point of making the eyes closed on the state crimes which are used as "messages" and which "we will never known the truth" to use a euphemism in fashion in Algiers." Breathless, cut from its society, but doted with a capacity to rebound, this establishment is today, cemented by only one project: lasting. notices a high French official. "As long as they maintain their gripes on the essential, money and security, they don't care estimate Selima Ghezali, the director of "LA NATION" newspaper. [end of quotation]

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The meaningless question of recognising or not the elections outcome!

(translation of an article written by Br Nacer Eddine El Hanafi before Gen. Zeroual speech of the 27/11/95)

The outcome of last week elections have been interpreted differently by different parties involved in the Algerian situation. The qualitative degree of these different analyses outcomes depends obviously on the starting basis over which the evaluation is build on. Three kind of people can be categorised with respect to the elections results, they are: those who do know the exact results, those who have a pretty good idea about them and those who have an irresistible desire to believe in what they want to believe in. A part of the first and last category, is unfortunately using these elections to intensify a "psychological war" by projecting an image of a "complete and final defeat of the opposition, the political and the armed ones". The Algerian media which is still under the grips of the eradicators in the military regime, have been "talking" days after days about the "surrender of hundreds and hundreds of terrorists". This is a deliberate attempt to provoke an immediate end to the expectative position every part seems to have taken while waiting for what Gen. Zeroual has to say concerning the concrete fulfilling of his electoral promises. It is an attempt to push the situation to that of the "pre-elections" period and the everlasting of the statu quo and bloodshed in which their selfish interests rest. Sometime, here and there some Algerian newspapers known to belong to what seem to be a different clan in the military hierarchy, tries in their own style to stop this provocation but they are still weak comparatively to "the official propaganda apparatus" which is still in the same hands. The newspaper "L'AUTHENTIQUE" for example, which is known to belong to the other clan, in its issue of the 23/11/95 warns about these fictional massive Mujahedeen surrenders saying: "Imagine one moment that this campaign (media campaign about the Mujahedeen "surrender"), which in fact is based on very few isolated cases, will intoxicate completely the society and the institutions? The brutal wake up is to be feared: the smallest operation, the first bombe will make not only human and material disaster, but will constitute a psychological victory for the terrorism." This newspaper belongs to the ex-chief of the Algerian secret police and actual advisor to Gen. Zeroual, it knows what it is talking about when it mentions: intoxication and psychological victory. Even declarations of the FIS leadership overseas are being used selectively or deformed intentionally in order to strike the "the fighting spirit of the Mujahedeen" further. What seems to many as a mere "diplomatic writing style of letters" has been risen to the status of "a complete revision of the FIS principles and believes", misunderstanding between brothers of the FIS representative overseas was risen to that of "disoriented leadership falling into fractional fights" etc... It may be necessary to restate the fundamentals of the political positions that resulted from the coup d'etat of the 11/01/92. The actual situation in Algeria is a direct consequence of that coup d'etat and incidently it is for the new "official Algeria" to make an unequivocal moral judgement of that historical events publicly if peace is sincerely wanted. This is a challenge and a test for Gen. Zeroual and for the Algerian people to know if there is really what he calls a "rupture" or not. The armed form which the struggle took, was a direct consequence of a massive, blind and indiscriminate oppression and more over, it was and still is due to the suppression of any serious alternatives or options to resists the process of crunching the free will of the people by the implementation of the state of siege. A big part of the Algerian people have supported the struggle in one way or another and for many these positions are devoted and unchanged today, tomorrow and in the hereafter in front of Allah. Those positions were not chosen because the Mujahedeen had a big and well equipped army in 1992, no! they are based on the difference between Right and Wrong as derived for the Muslims from the book of Allah and the Sunnah (tradition) of His prophet (p.b.u.h). These principles are not political slogans to be raised when the audience ask for them and to be repudiated when estimating they have lost their "populist appeal".

Today the military regime has unilaterally decided to organise the "presidential elections" of which the opposition including the FIS, has rejected the principle given the actual situation in terms of freedom restrictions in all its forms. Based on this fact, all subsequent questions about the recognising or not of the elections outcome is logically meaningless. The opposition has fortunately not reached a position of saying "indeed, the military regime was right and we were wrong" and it will be naive to say that if the same process is to be identically repeated, the opposition reaction will be different.

Now, the partisan media is pretending that there is a new political map in Algeria and that those who have received the support of 80 percent of the population have become "a tiny tiny minority rejected by the Algerian people" (one is strongly tempted to say: thanks to the torture centres and concentration camps in the Sahara to have made the Algerian people see how wrong they were in December 1991 and how wise they have become in November 95).

The opposition composed mainly of the FIS, the FFS [Socialist Forces Front] and the FLN will probably not be "moved" by the above "big jump to conclusions", it will however be its Right to challenge the "after-

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elections" authorities to reopen the political arena which was closed in Jan 92, take the troops back to the barracks, take the heavy chain out of the freedom of speech and expression as there should be no fear from this "tiny tiny minority rejected by the Algerian people" as the biased media headlines want the people to believe. Those who know the results well, have naturally serious doubt about the "showing off" contained in those type of headlines. In conclusion, the real issue of today is how to stop the bloodshed and go back to peace and normality. The Algerian people will surely don't want to see this vital issue to be devilishly masked or deviated by other false issues such as recognising or not the elections outcome.

The opportunity to solve this crisis has never been greater than today. It is better for those sincerely seeking a real exit to this deadlocked situation, to take this chance with both hands. This kind of opportunity will probably not happen more than once in a presidential mandate no matter how controversial the achievement of the later is!

A just solution to the crisis should go beyond its most urgent priority of an effective cessation of bloodshed, it should includes elements which will prevent such situation to happen again in the future. Amongst such preventive measures, a clear legislation that gives the people, the right to defend their institutions, past, present and future, by any means necessary including force, if a well defined "red line" comes to be crossed by any pretentious dictator. This may deter any single or group of lunatics dictators to come on "the top of a military tank, having on one hand, a gun and a box full of sophisticated torture equipments, and on the other hand, a charming propaganda flute" with the objective of appropriating the Algerian institutions on whatever pretext he or they may advance including that of "people having made the wrong vote"!

This kind of Right is given in "black on white" to the people in constitutions of countries that do respect their people and the sovereignty of the people over the State. Algeria however, seems very far from having some kind of constitution that will starts with: "We the Algerian people..."!

New of Jihad and Mujahedeen:

The Junta propaganda machine is at full speed in its nasty "psychological war". According to its newspapers all the leadership of the Mujahedeen is either dead or severely wounded that they needed to be transported outside Algeria to get proper medical care.

According to this lies, when the leadership is not dead, severely wounded or in Jail, it makes interviews from a phone box to their newspaper to talk about cease fire etc... The alleged interview of Youcef Boubras to the Junta newspaper "LA TRIBUNE" is a complete and vicious lie meant to hit the Mujahedeen fighting spirit.

Jihad operations

"we don't like to " beat around the bush ", we prefer clarity and frankness even if it means to be hanged for what we believe to be a duty and a right. The struggle against the regime of the military junta has become a legitimate and lawful duty as demonstrated previously, in order to "grab" the right of the people to freely choose. " (Shaykh Abu Abdelfatah ALI BELHADJ in " Fasl el kalam fi mouajahate dolm el hokam" ("The conclusive criterion in confronting injustice from the rulers"). page 303. Book written from cell No 09 in the Blida Military jail. 1992)

Algiers: Less than 24 hours after the disappointing speech of Gen. Zeroual, a group of Mujahedeen has set up an ambush to a Junta general. Affiliated to "La Casbah" the Mujaheeda and more precisely to a team under the leadership of Abdelmalek (Yacine Nappoli) who was given by the Junta propaganda machine as dead. He is still alive despite what his family has suffered the last three weeks. The Junta took his family hostage for all the electoral period.

The ambush took place on Tuesday morning in the town of Mourad Rais (Algiers). The General was in a Mazda 626 car where he was shot.

Batna: Information from that region reports many battles have been taking place. Amongst them one which took place in the Barika route last monday between the Mujahedeen and unites of the Junta paratroopers. 23 Junta paratroopers were shot, an important quantity of weapons, ammunition and telecommunication equipments were collected.

Lakdaria: The Mujahedeen have set up an ambush to a Junta paramilitary gendarmes unite. Five of the Junta soldiers were shot.

Reghaia: Three soldiers from the Junta "special force" were shot. A Kalashnikov and three pistol Berretta were collected.

Casbah: During the month of November, this symbolic site has counted more than thirty Mujahedeen operations.

Chrea: A convoy of the Junta soldier was attacked. Five Junta soldiers were shot. An other convoy of Junta paratrooper was also attacked using explosives. The outcome of this last operation is not yet known.

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Blida: The Mujahedeen have executed three military operations in the town of Bouguerfa and aimed at a Junta secret police officer, a Junta officer and a collaborator. In another operation aimed a "Red berets" convoy, three Junta soldiers were shot. As a retaliation, the locality was encircled for more than 18 hours and more than ten youth were arrested under the suspicious of having relations with the Mujahedeen.

Belcourt: A Junta police officer was shot and his weapon collected.

El harrach: A Junta paratrooper gendarme was shot as well as a an officer in the secret police.

Bouzereah: A Junta police inspector and two armed militia were shot.

Oued Jare: A militia centre was attacked by the Mujahedeen. Seven armed militia were shot and an important quantity of weapons were collected.

Egypt

Musa Refutes Sudan's Claims of Military Aid to Uganda

NC0212160295 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1500 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 2 Dec (MENA) — Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has reasserted President Husni Mubarak's remarks two days ago in which he refuted all Sudanese allegations that Egypt offered military aid to Uganda. Musa emphasized that Egypt will not commit aggression against Sudan and that it is concerned about Sudan's sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity, particularly regarding southern Sudan. He added: Such claims are lies and have no credibility .

Court Hears Case of 'Islamic Group' From Sudan

NC0212180495 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1615 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 2 Dec (MENA) — The Higher Military Court today began hearing the case of the returnees from Sudan involving 24 defendants amid strict security. At the beginning of the hearing, the president of the court called out the defendants' names to make sure they were all present. Their lawyers said they were present to defend them. The president of the court then read out the indictment in the case. It said that first defendant Ahmad 'Abd-al-'Azim, second defendant Hajjaj Jum'ah Muhammad, and third defendant Husni al-Sayyid Husayn led a group called the Islamic Group in violation of the law and the Constitution. They sought to obstruct the provisions of the Constitution, prevent the state establishment from performing its duties, attack citizens, threaten social peace, and use force to achieve the group's goals.

The military prosecution charged the rest of the defendants with joining the group despite their knowledge of its goals. The indictment also noted that all the defendants made a criminal agreement to murder, sabotage installations, possess arms without licenses, including hand grenades, automatic weapons, anti-armor RPG launchers, explosives, bullet rounds, and false identity cards and passports to achieve illegal goals. The indictment also noted that a number of the defendants infiltrated from Sudan via desert tracks with arms and explosives to carry out acts of terror.

The defense panel requested adjournment of the case to read the details of the indictment and case and requested referring all the defendants to forensic doctors because they were tortured during their interrogations. All the defendants stressed that they are not guilty. The defense panel asked that a member of the court visit the prison where the defendants are jailed to witness the inhuman treatment they are receiving. The president of the court called the defendants and asked everyone about his injuries and the court registered this. The court decided to defer hearing the case until 11 December in accordance with the defense panel to read the case and prepare for litigation and until the military prosecution refers the defendants to forensic doctors to determine the injuries sustained by them.

Musa Reacts to Israeli-Russian Military Accord

NC0312155595 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1430 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Dec (MENA) — Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has affirmed that any security concept in the Middle East that does not take the elements of peace into consideration will be short of meeting the area's peace requirements.

Responding to a question on the recently signed Israeli-Russian military cooperation agreement, Musa remarked that this agreement has nothing to do with peace. To Egypt, peace means serious talk about the issues of disarmament, particularly weapons of mass destruction, rather than about adding more weapons to the region, Musa said.

He added that Egypt's position is very clear. It stresses the need for and the importance of establishing a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, he said, adding that this is a central point in any discussion involving the region's security now or in the future.

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Responding to reporters' questions, Musa said that security in the Middle East cannot be imposed from the outside or by agreements between a regional state and a foreign power.

Musa concluded that Egypt has not as yet been briefed on the essence of the agreement, or its stipulations and clauses. He remarked that any disturbance in the region's security balance will necessarily be counterbalanced by efforts to restore that balance.

Decision Made 'in Principle' To Send Force to Bosnia

NC0212171295 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1638 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 2 Dec (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stated that a political decision has been made in principle to participate in the UN forces to implement the new peace agreement in Bosnia. In a statement this evening, he said that the arrangements for participation in this force are under discussion.

Interior Minister Announces Election Results

NC0112135495 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi held a news conference a short time ago to announce the results of the People's Assembly elections.

Al-Alfi praised the elections, describing them as the most important and biggest elections so far to elect a parliament that will be a reflection of Egypt's present and future status. He noted that they were held amid acute security challenges.

The interior minister refered to the unprecendented number of candidates and high voter turnout, which inspires trust in our sound democratic process.

Al-Alfi continued: With the grace of God, not a single terrorist incident occurred during the elections although it was natural, in view of the keen rivalry in some constituencies, that certain incidents should occur.

He said that the election was held to choose 444 deputies from 222 constituencies in accordance with an invididual candidacy system. He noted that 3,980 candidates representing all existing political and party affiliations contested the seats.

The interior minister said that 2,100 members of the judiciary fully supervised the elections and pointed out that the vote count and the announcement of the results took place at the headquarters of the General Election Committees in the presence of the judges who chair the committees, the candidates, and their representatives.

He announced that the vote counting has ended in 215 constituencies and is continuing in seven constituencies located in al-Qalyubiyah Governorate's Shibin al-Qanatir area, al-Sharqiyah Governorate's al-Husayniyah area, Kafr al-Shaykh Governorate's Fuwah area, al-Buhayrah Governorate's Idku area, and in al-Jizah.

The vote count showed that 136 candidates have won seats outright, including 123 National Democratic Party [NDP] candidates and 13 independents. They won 68 professionals seats, 50 workers seats, and 18 peasants seats.

The interior minister added that a run-off election will be held in 167 constituencies on Wednesday, 6 December, between 606 candidates who include 317 independents, 248 NDP candidates, 18 Wafd Party members, nine Labor Party members, seven members of the National Progressive Unionist Grouping, five members of the Nasirite Arab Democratic Party, and two Liberal Party members.

Discusses Poll Results, 'Excesses'

NC0112170595 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1525 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 1 Dec (MENA) — Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi has stressed that the political leadership is honest in its exercise of the democratic process in Egypt, and is concerned that the parliamentary elections be fair and reflect the will of the Egyptian people. He hoped that the run-off elections, which will be held on Wednesday, will take place in an atmosphere of security and stability and without any incidents.

In statements following the news conference in which he announced the results of the elections at noon today, al-Alfi explained that the run-off election is a result of the large number of candidates, which is unprecedented in Egypt's election history. It is impossible to get decisive results in the first round because a candidate must secure the highest percentage of votes to win, he said.

Asked why no Muslim Brotherhood members won although a large number of them ran in the elections, the interior minister said that the people are now aware of those who use religion as a cover for practices that serve their own interests. He stressed that the security services can deter and expose all attempts made by the Brothers under the cover of religion. We will not allow the Brothers to return to their underground activity, he said.

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On excesses by some police individuals, like interference and bias toward certain candidates, the interior minister stressed that all the policemen who allowed themselves to interfere were referred to the prosecution. He said they are being interrogated and every one of them will receive the harshest punishment.

The minister said that citizens have a duty to report any irregularities in the election process. He said citizens can report any incident involving candidates, voters, or police officers so that it can be investigated.

Al-Alfi said the democratic practice is available to everybody. We have 14 parties playing their role very clearly, and there is no discrimination between parties, he said.

Asked about the irregularities that occurred in some electoral constituencies, the interior minister said that there are several complaints which are being investigated. He explained that it is natural for irregularities to occur in view of the intensive rivalry among the various candidates, but that security men were keen on performing their duty without bias.

The interior minister said most irregularities occurred by agents of candidates who tried to enter the polling stations without powers of attorney. He affirmed that all citizens are equal before the law and that the policemen are themselves not allowed to enter the polling stations except by a permit from the head of the judicial committee. He denied that any agents had been arrested for committing these irregularities.

Asked about the accusations leveled at security men in some electoral constituencies, the interior minister said accusations were made against the security men even before the election process. These false accusations have come from people who lack confidence in themselves. Media representatives were present at the polling stations and witnessed the voting process.

The interior minister said several points indicate that the elections were fair, including the runoff elections and the defeat of some NDP candidates. He affirmed that the judiciary fully supervised the election process. He said we are a state of institutions and respect the law. We are with the people and we welcome any complaints.

Says Voter Turnout 50%

NC0112173595 Cairo MENA in English
1610 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Dec. 1 — (MENA) — Fifty percent of a 20.987 million-strong electorate republic wide voted in the parliamentary elections in Egypt, Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi announced.

MENA learned that the turnout percentage was broken down as follows: in Cairo 18 percent, in Lower Egypt's governorates 65 percent and in Upper Egypt's governorate 50 percent [figures as received].

In border-line governorates and Suez Canal cities the turnout was some 45 percent.

The first round of the elections has resulted in 136 candidates winning 123 of whom from the National Democratic Party and 13 independents.

Runoff elections will be held on Wednesday in 167 constituencies with 606 candidates going for it again.

Ministry Reports Election Violence Death Toll

NC0112180495 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1615 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 1 Dec (MENA) — An official security source at the Interior Ministry has said that 12 people died and 53 others were injured [in election violence] between 29 November and 1 December. [passage omitted]

Two More Die in Election Violence

NC0212212495 Paris AFP in English
2056 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Dec 2 (AFP) — Election violence claimed two more lives in Egypt on Saturday [2 December] while 95 members of the outlawed Moslem Brotherhood were ordered detained under emergency legislation, police said. The killings brought to 15 the number of people killed since Egyptians went to the polls on Wednesday to elect a new parliament.

In Suhaj in southern Egypt, the son of one candidate killed his brother for failing to do enough to support their father, a losing candidate in the first round. In the Nile Delta province of al-Sharqiyah a peasant was killed in a shootout between supporters of two candidates involved in a second round run-off to be held on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Interior Minister General Hasan al-Alfi ordered the detention of 95 activists from the Moslem Brotherhood who were arrested on Monday and Tuesday in Cairo, the northern Nile Delta and Alexandria. They appeared in court on Saturday accused of planning to use the election to "incite the masses to demonstrate against the government and to disrupt public order."

General al-Alfi decided to extend their detention under emergency laws in vigour since 1981 which allows the government to hold anybody for a renewable term of 40 days without trial if they threaten the security and stability of the country.

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The Brotherhood, which had been officially banned but tolerated until a recent crackdown, said its supporters had been arrested en masse in the days before the election. Police said around 1,100 of its activists who were arrested Tuesday were subsequently released after the polling, which saw President Husni Mubarak's ruling National Democratic Party sweep to a clear victory.

Al-Wafd, Brotherhood Figures Criticize Elections

JN0112193595 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1625 GMT 1 Dec 95

[Report by Salim Badawi; from the weekly "The Week's Event" program]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] The various currents and groups of the Egyptian opposition have accused the authorities of rigging the elections and interfering in the election process in the interest of the National Democratic party.

Al-Wafd Party led by, Fu'ad Siraj-al-Din, said that the Egyptian Government can no longer tolerate the existence of the opposition. Al-Wafd, a party which played a role in Egypt's history, branded the Egyptian elections as fake. Listen to what Siraj-al-Din himself says:

[Begin recording] [Siraj-al-Din] The elections were forged, fake. The forgeries were very obvious. Regrettably, [words indistinct] and security personnel and the escalations of [word indistinct]. In fact, I have never seen worse elections. [words indistinct]

[Salim Badawi] Are you demanding new elections?

[Siraj-al-Din] Under a neutral government.

[Badawi] But do you consider this possible?

[Siraj-al-Din] No, I don't. [end recording]

The Muslim Brotherhood candidates, who participated in the elections through other parties or as independents, consider last Wednesday's election a clear process of forgery. What are the basis of these accusations? Mustafa Mashhur, deputy controller general of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt has the following to say:

[Begin recording] [Mashhur] From the very beginning, even months before the elections, a campaign was launched against the Brotherhood. There were false accusations of terrorism, extremism, violence, and other things. Many arrests were made and then military trials were held for civilians, something which contravenes the constitution. Prison terms were handed down to many figures who were university teachers or in charge of trade unions, respectable people. In their entire history, the Brotherhood members have never clashed with the state or carried out violent acts against it. All they did, through the trade unions and [word indistinct] was to serve the people and the country. The arrests and trials were acts of interference to prevent the brotherhood figures from running for elections.

Moreover, the national media, which belong to the government, scandalized the Brotherhood and insulted them. We have no means to respond to them. A few days before the elections, new arrests reached more than 1,500. The arrests included representatives to the election committees. This is what happened.

[Badawi] In your opinion, does this confrontation which preceded the elections between the authorities and the Brotherhood and this media campaign as you put it, which tried to associate the Brotherhood with the armed Islamic groups, represent the basic elements which contributed to your failure in the first round or is your political platform behind this failure?

[Mashhur] We demand the implementation of Islam and Islamic laws because we believe they are the ideal solution for all the ills of society, being from God Almighty and not from Humans like socialism or nationalism or others. We believe in this and demand this. This is the (?demand) of all Muslims, not only the Brotherhood. This is our method. We do not challenge or provoke anyone. Moreover, it seems that the foreign media, especially the Jews, created hostility toward Islam and the Muslims, talking of the Islamic fundamentalists, hardliners, and extremists, and associating the moderates, like the Brotherhood, with those who resort to violence. They created this confusion. The governments then regarded the Brotherhood as a terrorist and an extremist group. This is what happened.

In all the positions they occupied before this time, be it in the professional organizations or others, the Brotherhood figures have served the people, proving to be men of reform and of benefit to the people, that they had no intention to harm anybody. They launch lies against us, trying to depict us as terrorists and to give us worse descriptions. They tried to link us with terrorists but failed. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Wafd Party Threatens To Boycott Runoff Election

NC0312154595 Paris AFP in English 1458 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Dec 3 (AFP) — The opposition Wafd party threatened Sunday [3 December] to boycott Egypt's election run-offs this week to protest government "fraud" in the first round when opposition parties failed to clinch a single seat.

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"Wafd is studying the possibility of boycotting the second round and will come to a decision Monday or Tuesday," the liberal party's second in command, Ibrahim Dusuqi Abazah, told a press conference.

Opposition candidates, who failed to win a single seat outright in the first round of parliamentary elections last Wednesday, accused the government of widespread vote-rigging and harrassment. On Wednesday voters will again go to the polls in the remaining 307 seats where no single candidate won a clear 51 percent of the vote.

Another Wafd official told AFP that the party's leader Fu'ad Siraj-al-Din, did not support a boycott. "He is not in favour of this alternative because he still hopes that a dozen Wafd candidates can win seats," Yussef Zaki said.

But Abazah said: "Even if the government allows the opposition to win some seats in the poll, it will be no compensation because all the standard-bearers were eliminated in the first round."

The ruling National Democratic Party of President Husni Mubarak won 123 seats of the 137 in which there were clear winners last Wednesday. The remaining 14 went to independents.

"There was real hope of change. But a minority believes it has the right to rule Egypt and no longer tolerates an honest force sharing the country with it," said Muhammad al-Hifnawi, one of the Wafd's 18 remaining candidates.

Wafd leaders presented at the press conference 500 unused voting cards which they said they had been able to buy. "It's a widespread practice of the National Democratic Party to allow electors to vote several times," Abazah said.

A non-governmental committee which observed the first round of voting said Sunday that it witnessed "flagrant and serious" violations, including voters names appearing on electoral lists up to 20 times and the use of violence.

Opposition Party Stresses Role in Runoff Elections

NC0412115095 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1052 GMT 4 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 4 Dec (MENA) — Yasin Siraj al-Din, deputy leader of the opposition Wafd party, has stated that the party will not withdraw from the runoff elections for the People's Assembly slated for 6 December.

He said the opposition must continue in the election battle until the end. In a statement to MENA, the deputy leader of the Wafd party said that party leader Fu'ad Siraj al-Din has made it a point that the party's candidates will stay in the election battle.

Militants Urge Egyptians To Take Up Arms After Poll

NC0112142395 Paris AFP in English
1335 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Dec 1 (AFP) — Moslem militants urged Egyptians on Friday [1 December] to take up arms against the government after accusing it of ballot-rigging during parliamentary elections.

The International Justice Group (IJG), in a statement entitled "Holy war is the solution," said vote-rigging in the election on Wednesday proved that the government simply wanted to muzzle all forms of opposition.

"It is time for sincere Egyptians to take up arms and wage a jihad (holy war) to eradicate this regime which carries out all sorts of injustices and tyranny against thousands of young Moslems in Egypt," it said. "The (election) fraud confirms that this dictatorial and criminal regime only wants to muzzle" the opposition," it said.

The IJG, in a reference to the Moslem Brotherhood which put up candidates mainly as independents in the election, added that some groups had mistakenly thought they could achieve something by taking part in the polls.

Opposition candidates won only two parliamentary seats with three quarters of the election results announced Friday and President Husni Mubarak's party was clearly heading for victory after a campaign in which 12 people died.

The ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) won 125 seats and had a further 146 candidates in a second round of voting after results were announced for 317 of the 444 contested seats in the People's Assembly.

The NDP, in power since it was founded in 1978, was widely expected to secure the two thirds majority necessary to elect the president in the December 6 run-offs in seats where no candidate won at least half the vote.

However, the IJG said it was confident that the government would collapse and called on all other countries to cut their links with it.

The group, along with two other militant organizations — Jihad and the Jamaa Islamiyya — claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing that killed 17 and wounded 60 at the Egyptian embassy in Pakistan on November 19.

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More than 900 people have died in Egypt since March 1992, when Moslem militants began a violent campaign to overthrow the government.

Embassy Bombing Suspects Said To Flee to Afghanistan

NC0212183195 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 26 Nov 95 pp 1, 4

[Report by 'Abd-al-Rahim 'Ali]

[FBIS Translated Text] Informed sources have told AL-AHALI that five of the planners of the criminal bombing of the Egyptian Embassy in Pakistan have fled to areas under Hekmetyar's control in Afghanistan. The sources also believe it is very likely that Ayman al-Zawahiri, one of those who financed the bombing, fled to Sudan via Iran. Intensive efforts are being made to persuade Hekmetyar to hand over all the terrorists the Pakistani authorities want for questioning. At the same time the Egyptian authorities have asked Pakistan to hand over all the Egyptian nationals who have been arrested on suspicion of involvement in the bombing, whether they have been indicted or not.

According to preliminary information obtained by the Pakistani-Egyptian-U.S. investigating team in Islamabad, the bombing was jointly planned and financed by the leaders of the al-Jihad Organization and the Islamic Group. Al-Jihad leaders Ayman al- Zawahiri and Yasir Sirri financed the operation. Muhammad Shawqi al-Islambuli, Rifa'i Ahmad Taha, 'Uthman Khalid Ibrahim, Ahmad Mustafa, and two Afghan Egyptians made the plans for the bombing.

According to the sources, the planners, who had been living in Haydarabad and the Jaluzi camp [placename as received] near Peshawar, fled to Afghanistan immediately after an Egyptian investigating team arrived in Pakistan. They crossed into Afghanistan via tribal areas in the Samar Kheyl region beyond the Jalalabad hills.

A team of international antiterrorist officers arrived in Islamabad, accompanied by experts specializing in the activities of "Afghan Egyptians." They carried with them photos and fingerprints of some fugitive terrorists with court convictions.

A high-level security source left Cairo for Pakistan last Thursday [23 November] to join an earlier team of investigators to help in the investigations and draw up lists of terrorists wanted for extradition.

After President Husni Mubarak met former Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in Bonn in April 1993, the Pakistan authorities handed over to Egypt the names of 1,500 Egyptians out of a total of 3,800 Arabs living there. The list included the names of 600 terrorists.

This was followed by an Egyptian-Afghan agreement signed during President Rabbani's visit to Cairo. In accordance with this agreement, security measures began against the Afghan Arabs. Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto then decided to expel the Egyptians working in relief organizations in Pakistan. The Pakistani justice minister then visited Egypt and initialed an extradition agreement. The final signing of the agreement took place during a subsequent visit by the Egyptian justice minister to Pakistan.

The above measures enabled the Egyptian authorities to arrest Hisham Abazah, a leader of the al-Jihad Organization, who had been sent back to Egypt by Ayman al-Zawahiri to reorganize the Vanguards of Conquest group. Abazah provided his interrogators with important information about the terrorists abroad and al-Zawahiri's trips to several Arab and European countries using forged passports. Abazah pointed out that al-Zawahiri enjoys a lot of freedom of movement in these countries.

Meanwhile, Egypt put more pressure on the countries that were giving asylum to terrorist leaders. Last Friday [24 November] a security delegation left for Britain to discuss the extradition of two very dangerous terrorists: 'Adil 'Abd-al-Majid 'Abd-al-Bari and Yasir Tawfiq Sirri. The latter previously had a death penalty passed against him in connection with the assassination of President al-Sadat.

Yesterday AL-AHALI received a faxed message consisting of a declaration by Sirri denouncing the Egyptian Government, military tribunals, and the verdicts they pass. He concluded his statement with the words: "I tell Mubarak and his henchmen: I renounce you and your world for I have God on my side. I fear no one except God, may He be exalted."

Paper Cites Embassy Source on Postponed Gore Visit

NC0412065595 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0600 GMT 4 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 4 Dec (MENA)—A diplomatic source at the U.S. Embassy in Cairo has said that U.S. Vice President Al Gore's visit to Egypt has been postponed until the end of January 1996. The visit had been slated for this week.

In a statement to today's AL-AKHBAR, the source added that the visit was postponed because the vice president will be busy with issues at home.

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Paper Previews Mubarak-Peres Summit 7 Dec

NC0412093795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0910 GMT 4 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 4 Dec (MENA) — The newspaper AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I has reported that Thursday's [7 December] summit between President Husni Mubarak and Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres will discuss ways to reach a final agreement on the issue of Egyptian POW's killed in the 1956 and 1967 wars and a solution to the issue of Israel's possession of nuclear weapons.

The paper said that Mubarak and Peres will also discuss bilateral ties, Arab-Israeli peace developments, and ways of formulating a definitive Egyptian-Israeli position on Syrian-Israeli peace. They will seek to do this before Peres' meeting with U.S. President Bill Clinton in Washington next Monday (11 December).

The paper cited Palestinian sources as saying that the Palestinian Authority is holding intensive contacts with Egypt and Israel to explore the possibility of holding a threeway summit involving President Mubarak, Yasir 'Arafat, and Peres.

Libya

Al-Sanusi on 'Wave of Arrests,' Abu-Zayd Killing

MM0112160895 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 1 Dec 95 p 6

[Report by Kamil al-Tawil: "Al-Sanusi: Arrests in Libya Include Family Members, Supporters"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London — Prince Idris al-Sanusi has spoken of arrests Libya has been witnessing for some time and which include a number of al-Sanusi family members and Islamists supportive of the al-Sanusi family in the country. He stressed his determination to work to restore "democracy, freedom, and legitimacy" in Libya.

Al-Sanusi said yesterday that he had offered his condolences to the family of Libyan oppositionist 'Ali Muhammad Abu-Zayd, who was assassinated in London last Sunday. (The opposition accuses Libyan authorities of murdering him, but Tripoli has denied it.) He said in a statement that the late oppositionist "comes from the Rajban tribe, which has strong links with the al-Sanusi family and line." He said that his murder "is a painful calamity," stressing that "efforts will be continued to restore democracy, legitimacy, and human rights in Libya so that every citizen can live a secure and peaceful life."

Al-Sanusi spoke, in a statement to be issued today, about the violent incidents that have occurred recently in some areas in Libya (Banghazi). Islamic groups were said to have been behind them. He said that the authorities have over recent weeks launched "storming and arrest operations against large sections of our people and a large number of brothers and al-Sanusi supporters, in addition to members of the family in various cities and areas, with no consideration for age or disease."

He said that "the aim of the arrests is to contain the wave of anger and the large-scale uprising in Libya, which shook the regime's foundations and nearly toppled it." He stressed that "the regime's actions against the al-Sanusi family and the al-Sanusi movement in general are a desperate attempt to destroy the movement and erase its pioneering and historic role in leading the jihad, the [Islamic] call, and education in Libya."

He went on: "The al-Sanusi movement (with its leaders, brothers, and members of the al-Sanusi family) was at the forefront of the people in the various stages of the jihad against imperialism, and it can only be in the forefront of the people in the fight against the tyrants through efforts, sacrifices, and struggle, whatever the sacrifices."

He stressed that "these attacks will cause us to be more determined to continue the role launched by our father, 'Abdallah 'Abid al-Sanusi, in order to end the regime of aggression and restore democracy, freedom, and legitimacy to our country."

Concluding, he said: "In these difficult circumstances we salute the masses of our people and the al-Sanusi brothers, youths and men who are engaged in this fierce battle for their patience, jihad, and serious and effective confrontation against the forces of oppression and tyranny."

Security Deployments Follow Mass Prison Escape

MM0412120995 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 2 Dec 95 pp 1, 4

[Report by Alan George and Sawsan Abu-Husayn: "Security Deployment in Libya After Political Prisoners' Escape]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, Cairo — Libyan territory was put on high alert yesterday following reports to the effect that a large number of political prisoners had managed to escape from a prison in Tripoli.

Informed sources in the Libyan capital have said that strict scrutiny measures are currently being applied at border crossings and checkpoints have been set up in Tripoli streets as well as on the main roads linking Libyan cities.

The political prisoners managed to escape last weekend from a new prison in the southeastern suburb of Tripoli.

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At least 30 guards were wounded during the clashes that accompanied the mass escape from prison.

Information received from Libya indicates that most of the escapees were jailed in the wake of recent security troubles in Banghazi. Libyan authorities said at the time that they had foiled a plot hatched by fundamentalist groups that have links with neighboring states. A number of houses in the coastal city of Tubruq were demolished within the framework of the campaign launched by Libyan authorities to pursue these groups.

Since the political prisoners' escape from the prison, Libyan security forces have been conducting extensive search campaigns in the Tripoli suburbs, where numerous senior state officials, among them some ministers' own private farms. Reports arriving from the Libyan capital say that a number of Libyan officials have moved their families to the center of the capital, on the grounds that it is easier to protect them there.

A Libyan Army official has denied any security deployment in Libyan streets, stressing in an exclusive statement to AL-SHARQ AL- AWSAT that calm is prevalent in Libya, whereas other Libyan sources had said that "there are cases of rioting staged by some fundamentalists fleeing neighboring states in cooperation with some members of the Islamic Jihad Group in Libya."

For his part, Libyan Ambassador to Cairo Faraj al-Sa'idi has denied to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that there have been any deployments or arrests, stressing that the reports of arrests or riots are absolutely baseless.

Commenting on reports about the existence of extremist groups from the Jihad movement, Al-Sa'idi said that "we hear these phrases from some foreign quarters." He pointed out that such movements "do not exist in Libya."

Libyan sources have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the Jamahiriyah is in the process of deporting Mauritanian workers, especially after Mauritania's recognition of Israel. Libya has already severed relations. The sources believe the Libyan security forces' deployment is linked to the workers' deportation.

The economic situation in the country has worsened further as a result of the blockade imposed on Libya by the United Nations to force Colonel al-Qadhdhafi to hand over the two [Libyans] suspected of involvement in the Lockerbie incident.

Libyans are complaining about the high inflation rates, and government employees are complaining about the delay in paying their salaries. Many employees are now compelled to find another source of income. As a result, absenteeism from work is on the increase and unemployment among young men is high.

Sudan

Al-Bashir Interviewed on Relations With Iran, Egypt

LD0312204495 Tehran IRNA in English 1947 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Khartoum, Dec. 3, IRNA — President 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir said here on Sunday [3 December] relations between Iran and Sudan has been based on Islamic brotherhood.

In an interview with IRNA correspondent, al-Bashir said despite the propaganda campaign against the growing trend of relations between the two countries, bilateral relations enjoy stability and top priority.

On trade relations between Iran and Sudan, he said, "Tehran-Khartoum economic relations should further develop, but, it seems that regional developments and the issues concerning national economy have hindered expansion of trade, we expect the respective ministers of the two countries to probe into the matter and try to provide programs to boost trade between the two countries."

On the Western allegation against Iran and Sudan accusing the two countries of supporting terrorism, he said the accusations levelled against the Islamic states are aimed at justifying their enforcement of an economic sanction, their bringing about political isolation and their preparing ground for aggression against these countries.

"The policy of the United States against Islam is very clear to us. The Americans well know that the Muslim nations are against terrorism due to their steadfastness to the norms and principles governing Islam. They would only fight with those who have entered into a battle against them."

On his country's relations with Egypt, he said relations between Sudan and Egypt has not yet improved and Egyptian media have embarked on political assualt and propaganda against Sudan.

"Egypt hosts anti-government elements of Sudan, in addition, they fully support any attempt which is aimed at either undermining the country's interest or toppling the present government in Sudan. Egypt continues occupation of Sudanese province of Halaib. All these moves demonstrate that Egypt does not make effort to improve relations with Sudan," the Sudanese president said.

On the dispute between Sudan and Uganda, al-Bashir said Ugandan invasion of Sudan took place with blatant

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support of the West and collaboration of a neighbour country. They set up an air bridge to Uganda to supply a numerous number of tanks and other heavy weapons to encounter Sudan, he said.

Accord Signed on Chamber of Commerce With Libya

EA0312203095 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] An agreement to set up a joint Sudanese-Libyan Chamber of Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture was signed in Khartoum yesterday. The signing ceremony was attended by Major General Muhammad 'Uthman Muhammad Sa'id, secretary general for Arab-Libyan-Sudanese integration.

The objectives of the agreement are the promotion of manufactured goods and commercial commodities between the two countries in addition to the exchange of commercial reports and information to develop economic relations between Sudan and Libya. The chamber also has as one of its objectives the elimination of complicated procedures which face importers and exporters in both countries. The agreement states that the chamber's main headquarters will be in Khartoum but it will have a branch in Tripoli.

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GCC Foreign Ministers Prepare Summit Agenda

LD0312100895 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0853 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Muscat, 3 Dec (KUNA) — The foreign ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] countries here today ended their meeting to prepare the agenda of the GCC summit, which is due to begin tomorrow.

A Kuwaiti diplomatic source told the Kuwaiti news agency [KUNA] after the meeting that among the most important topics to be discussed at the summit was the issue of Iraq's implementation of the UN resolutions concerning its aggression on Kuwait and affirmation of the need for Iraq to implement the resolutions.

The source added that the leaders would also discuss developments in the Middle East peace process and relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The source pointed out that the Muscat summit would discuss the Arab situation in general and review developments in Bosnia- Herzegovina in the light of the peace agreement signed recently by Bosnian sides.

The source said that the summit would discuss terrorism and extremism, and pointed out that issues concerning military cooperation and security matters would be discussed.

The source added that the summit would also discuss issues concerning the implementation of the GCC states' unified economic accord and issues concerning the progress of the GCC states.

The meeting was attended by the foreign ministers of the six GCC states. Kuwait was represented by Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, the first deputy prime minister and foreign minister.

Oman's Bin-'Alawi Says GCC Summit Agenda Finalized

JN0412074195 Muscat Sultanate of Oman Television Network in Arabic 0700 GMT 4 Dec 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] The foreign ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] countries yesterday ended their meetings to prepare for the GCC summit. The GCC foreign ministers finalized the summit agenda.

In a statement at the end of the meeting, His Excellency Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, [Omani] minister of state for foreign affairs, said that the GCC summit agenda has been finalized, adding that it will be presented to their majesties and highnesses during their summit. Bin-'Alwai said that the political part of the agenda will be addressed within the framework of private consultations among the GCC leaders, noting that the GCC leaders will also discuss issues of joint cooperation among the GCC states, which were prepared by the joint committees.

Kuwait

Prime Minister Interviewed on Upcoming GCC Summit

LD0312224895 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1932 GMT 3 Dec 95

[Report on interview with Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, the heir apparent and prime minister, by unidentified correspondent of the Omani news agency; place and date not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Muscat, 3 Dec — Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, the heir apparent and prime minister, expressed his hope that the Gulf Cooperation Council's [GCC] 16th summit conference would come out with momentous decisions for lifting joint Gulf action on the level of the regional and international dangers, challenges, and developments.

He said in an interview conducted by the Omani news agency, broadcast this evening, that "the security of the GCC countries was an indivisible entity ... and each country formed a depth of security for all the others," stressing by that statement the unity of the security concept for the council's six countries. [passage omitted]

He stressed the need for "the Iraqi regime to abandon its aggressive intentions towards Kuwait." [passage omitted]

The next question was on the forthcoming summit of their majesties and highnesses the council's leaders. This summit has a special significance in light of all the developments which the Gulf and Arab regions were experiencing. What are your highness's expectations of the outcome of this summit, be it for the council's peoples, or at the Gulf and Arab levels?

The shaykh answered: It is hoped that their majesties and highnesses, the leaders of the council's countries, would produce momentous decisions for lifting the joint Gulf action to the level of the dangers and challenges at the regional level, and the developments at the international level. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] What are the means for establishing and maintaining security in the Gulf, and have Kuwaiti measures to achieve that been completed?

[Al-Sabah] The first and most important measure for maintaining the security of the Gulf is represented by

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adopting and consecrating the concept of unity in the GCC's security as a starting point for any security actions. The security of the GCC countries is an indivisible entity, and each country forms a security depth for all of them.

[Correspondent] In light of the decline in oil prices at the international level, the oil producing countries are reviewing many of their development programs, etc. What are Kuwait's priorities over the coming period?

[Al-Sabah] The [Kuwaiti] government is working towards rationalizing expenditures, and by other means, to get rid of the deficit in the state's general budget ... but priority is always given to defense efforts to protect the homeland's independence and sovereignty, and to safeguard the citizens' safety and stability.

[Correspondent] In your highness's view, what are the aspects which should be given more interest in the council's framework over the coming period, and what are the means for activating and enhancing the council's effectiveness, be it in the Gulf region or abroad?

[Al-Sabah] There is no doubt that activating joint defense actions attracts suitable concern from the leaders of the council's countries, together with unifying stances towards regional and international issues, and dealing with other countries.

[Correspondent] Where is the Arab League in connection with the peace process in the Middle East, and what is its future in light of that, especially as there are attempts to amend the league's charter, and endorse an Arab charter of honor and the statute of the Arab court of justice ...

[Al-Sabah] The peace process in the Middle East is moving with firm steps and has received wide support and backing ... Kuwait had previously expressed its support for the peace process, hoping that desired progress would be achieved on the Syrian and Lebanese courses. As for joint Arab action, it desperately needs new concepts and bases which would guarantee for it seriousness, realism, and effectiveness.

Saudi Arabia

Medical Condition of King Fahd Reported

AFP Reports Blood Clot on Brain

NC0212211095 Paris AFP in English 2020 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Muscat, Dec 2 (AFP) — Saudi Arabia's King Fahd has suffered a blood clot on the brain and will miss the Gulf summit starting here Monday [4 December], a Gulf Arab diplomat said Saturday.

King Fahd, 74, ruler of the world's biggest oil producer, has been hospitalised since Thursday for what the Saudi authorities described as "routine medical tests."

Amid growing speculation about his health, Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal told reporters here that the king was in "good health" and would be able to leave hospital on Sunday.

However, a Gulf diplomat told AFP that the king had suffered a blood clot on the brain on Thursday.

"The king's doctors told him to rest and advised him not to attend the GCC summit," the diplomat said.

"As a result, the king will be replaced at the summit by Crown Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz who will head the Saudi delegation."

It will be the first time King Fahd, who suffers from diabetes, has missed the annual summit of the Gulf Cooperation Council, which groups Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Bahrain.

Saudi Arabia played down the speculation about his health on Saturday, publishing a message he sent to King Husayn saying: "Praise be to God, the medical tests are reassuring."

Several Arab and world leaders have inquired after the king's health, including presidents Hafiz al-Asad of Syria, Ilyas al-Hirawi of Lebanon, 'Umar al-Bashir of Sudan, King Hassan II of Morocco, King Juan Carlos of Spain and King Husayn of Jordan, along with former US president George Bush and former secretary of state James Baker.

His state of health is being closely monitored by oil markets concerned about any upset in the world's top oil producing country which produces eight million barrels per day. Saudi Arabia possesses a quarter of the world's reserves.

Meanwhile, GCC foreign minister began preparatory talks ahead of the summit.

Lebanese Paper: King Suffered Stroke

LD0112144195 Tehran IRNA in Persian 1122 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Beirut, 1 Dec — The Lebanese newspaper "AL-SAFIR" has revealed in its Friday edition that King Fahd of Saudi Arabia had suffered a stroke on Wednesday [29 November 1995]. Quoting informed American sources who did not wish their names to be made public, this newspaper wrote: Officials in the

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U.S. State Department, especially U.S. Under Secretary of State Robert Pelletreau, and also National Security officials in the White House are very worried about this event.

Those sources have added that the issue of Fahd's stroke has once again raised the issue of his succession.

Hospital Says 'No Need for Concern'

LD0312103395 Riyadh SPA in Arabic
0947 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Riyadh, 3 Dec — The King Faysal specialist hospital and research center in Riyadh today — Sunday 11 Rajab 1416 AH, corresponding to 3 December 1995 — released the following medical bulletin:

King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, was admitted to the King Faysal specialist hospital and research center in Riyadh on Thursday 8 Rajab 1416 AH, corresponding to 30 November 1995.

Clinical, analytical, and radiation tests were carried out by the medical staff at the hospital and the results are reassuring, praise be to God.

A medical team brought in from the United States carried out further comprehensive medical tests on Friday and Saturday — 9 and 10 Rajab 1416 AH, corresponding to 1 and 2 December 1995 — and confirmed that the health of the custodian of the two holy mosques is reassuring and that there is no need for concern.

The medical team also reiterated that his health condition, may God protect him, is temporary; it was caused by pressure of work. Therefore, the doctors have asked the custodian of the two holy mosques to take the necessary rest.

We beseech Almighty God to protect the custodian of the two holy mosques, give good health, and guide him.

Riyadh Doctors: King 'Seriously Ill'

NC0312153995 Paris AFP in English
1511 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dubayy, Dec 3 (AFP) — King Fahd of Saudi Arabia is seriously ill after suffering a blood clot on his brain, raising doubts about his ability to govern and prompting meetings about who might succeed him, diplomats and doctors said.

If the 74-year-old king survives his illness, he will not be able to govern in the near future, doctors in Riyadh said over the telephone.

Arab diplomats added the top 30 princes of the ruling al-Sa'ud family have held several meetings on who will succeed him. Most agreed to increase the authority of Crown Prince 'Abdallah while waiting for the situation to become clear, but the princes differed over how much power he should have, diplomats said.

Several sources said Prince 'Abdallah would represent King Fahd at the summit of the Gulf Cooperation Council, opening Monday [4 December] in Muscat, although there was no official confirmation.

The royal cabinet said Sunday the king's condition was "reassuring" after he suddenly took ill because of overwork, but added that doctors advised him to take as much rest as he needed.

King Fahd To Reassure Country About Health

NC0312103195 Paris AFP in English
0934 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dubayy, Dec 3 (AFP) - King Fahd is scheduled to leave the hospital Sunday [3 December] and appear on television to reassure people about his health, Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Prince al-Faysal Al Sa'ud said in remarks to the press.

The royal cabinet said the 74-year-old monarch was admitted to hospital on Thursday to undergo routine medical texts, but a Gulf Arab diplomat said he is being treated for a blood clot on the brain.

Prince Al Sa'ud said Saturday after arriving in Muscat for a pre- summit meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) that the king's health was satisfactory and that he would leave the hospital on Sunday.

"King Fahd will appear on television to reassure everybody and speak to the Saudi people about his state of health," Prince Al Sa'ud told the AL-ITTIHAD newspaper during an interview in Muscat.

Prince Al Sa'ud said an official statement would be issued later in the day on whether King Fahd would attend the GCC summit which opens on Monday in Muscat.

The Gulf diplomat who asked not to be named said Crown Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Ab-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud will represent King Fahd at the summit as doctors have asked the king to stay at home and get rest.

It would be the first time that King Fahd has missed a summit of the GCC states of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman, which has been held annually since it was founded in 1980.

King Fahd's health is being followed closely by the world's financial markets which fear instability in Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporting nation.

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World Leaders Inquire About King Fahd's Health

Qatari Amir, Lebanon's al-Hariri

LD3011145895 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1430 GMT 30 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Highness Amir of Qatar Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, His Excellency Prime Minister of the Republic of Lebanon Rafiq al-Hariri, and His Excellency President of Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina Alija Izetbegovic, this afternoon made telephone contacts to be assured about the health of King Fahd Bin- 'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, may God protect him.

Syria's al-Asad, Tunisia's Ben Ali

LD0112124195 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad made a telephone call late this morning to inquire about the health of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, the custodian of the two holy mosques, may God protect him. Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali also wished the custodian of the two holy mosques a speedy recovery on the occasion of the king's admission to hospital to undergo ordinary medical check-ups. This came in a message his excellency sent to the king, TAP reported today. His excellency the Tunisian president prayed to God to protect the custodian of the two holy mosques from all discomfort and keep him in good health, so that he may continue to lead the Saudi people to further progress and prosperity.

Sudanese President al-Bashir

LD0212123195 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Lebanon's President Ilyas al-Hirawi and Sudan's President 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir telephoned this morning to inquire about the health of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques.

Egyptian President Mubarak

LD0312120795 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak of the Arab Republic of Egypt this afternoon made a telephone call to His Royal Highness Prince Salman Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, governor of the Riyadh region, to inquire about the health of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques.

His royal highness informed President Mubarak that the state of the king's health is good, praise be to God.

Clinton, Major, al-Qadhdhafi, Others

LD0312215895 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 2230 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques, received more cables of congratulations on the reassuring medical test results from King Hassan of Morocco, President Clinton of the United States, Mr. John Major of Britain, President Isaias Afwerki of Eritrea, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia, President Lieutenant-General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir of Sudan, Colonel. Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the 1 September revolution [of Libya], U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry, and U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Robert Pelletreau.

The custodian of the two holy mosques answered them with thanks and appreciation for their kind feelings and genuine prayers. He wished them all well.

King Fahd Receives King Husayn Message, Replies

LD0112200395 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 1 Dec 95

["Text" of message to King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, the custodian of the two holy mosques, from his brother King Husayn Bin-Talal of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] To brother King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques: Peace and God's mercy and blessing be upon you. I have just arrived back in the homeland, and I was pleased to hear about the result of the medical checkup that you have undergone, which was reassuring, thanks to God, and that you are well and in good health. My dear brother: May God protect you and bestow His approval upon you. Peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you.

[Signed] Your brother Husayn

King Fahd has sent the following message to his majesty:

Your Majesty brother King Husayn Bin-Talal of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: Peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you. I received your majesty' message, and I thank your majesty for the kind sentiments and sincere brotherly wishes you have expressed following the medical checkups we have undergone, the results of which were reassuring, thanks to God. I pray

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to God to grant lasting good health to all and to protect you from adversity.

[passage omitted]

Crown Prince To Represent King at GCC Conference

LD0312185195 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1825 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Riyadh, 3 Dec — We have received the following from the royal court:

On behalf of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, may God support him, His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the crown prince, deputy prime minister, and commander of the National Guard, will head with God's will for Muscat tomorrow at the head of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's delegation to the Gulf Cooperation Council's 16th summit conference, which will convene in Muscat tomorrow, Monday, 12 Rajab 1416 A.H., corresponding to 4 December 1995.

May safety accompany his highness in his abode and travels.

Speculation on Effect of King's Illness on GCC Summit

NC0412092095 Paris AFP in English 0830 GMT 4 Dec 95

[Report by Hassan Jouini]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Muscat, Dec 4 (AFP)—The illness of Saudi Arabia's King Fahd has cast a shadow over a summit of Gulf Arab leaders opening here later on Monday [4 December], Arab diplomats said.

"Reports about the king's health getting worse are going to hover over the summit and threaten to eclipse the subjects which have to be discussed," according to the diplomat who asked not to be named.

Crown Prince 'Abdallah will fill in for King Fahd who will miss his first Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit since he was appointed monarch of the world's largest oil producer in 1982.

Omani newspapers ran front-page stories saying Prince 'Abdallah will head the Saudi delegation to Muscat "under an accord" reached between King Fahd and Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id during a telephone conversation late last Wednesday.

King Fahd, 74, was admitted to King Faysal specialist hospital in Riyadh early on Thursday.

Diplomats and doctors said Sunday that King Fahd was seriously ill after suffering a blood clot on his brain, despite official Saudi statements to the contrary.

His condition "is not good" and "he will not be able to resume his work in the near future" if he survives his illness, a doctor said.

Arab diplomats added the top 30 princes of the ruling Sa'ud family have held several meetings on who will succeed him.

Most agreed to increase Prince 'Abdallah's authority while waiting for the situation to become clear, but disagreed on how much power he should have, diplomats said.

The royal cabinet said Sunday that the king's condition was "reassuring" after he suddenly took ill because of overwork, but that doctors advised him to take as much rest as he needed.

It did not specify the nature of his illness.

"The importance of a GCC summit does not lie in the working sessions or official communiques, but in the bilateral contacts between heads of state, where the main subjects are discussed and settled," another Arab diplomat said.

"King Fahd's absence will indeed diminish the importance of these contacts," the diplomat said. Questions on the official agenda have already been "amply discussed by the ministers" and special committees, he added.

On the eve of the summit, Iraq urged GCC countries to adopt a "courageous (Arab) national position" on demanding an end to UN sanctions imposed on Baghdad after its troops invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

The UAE's president, Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, meanwhile, asked Baghdad on Sunday to apply UN Security Council resolutions in order to help mend Arab rifts caused by the invasion of Kuwait.

Also on the agenda is the dispute between the UAE and Iran over three strategic Gulf islands: Abu Musa, Greater and Lesser Tunb.

Shaykh Zayid said on the eve of the summit said that Iran "attacked us and does not want to restore what rightfully belongs to others."

Gulf Arab leaders were also expected to discuss regional security, terrorism, the Arab-Israeli peace process, normalization between the Gulf states and Israel and economic cooperation with the European Union.

Prince 'Abdallah will join the leaders of Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates at the GCC

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summit, which is due to begin at 7 p.m. (1300 GMT) Monday at the Bustan Palace hotel.

The summit is due to end on Wednesday.

Defense Ministry, Oil Company Said Targeted in Foiled Plot

NC0212181795 Cairo AL-'ARABI in Arabic 27 Nov 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Saudi security authorities have foiled a new attempt to bomb the Defense Ministry building and the Petromin Oil Company building. High-level Saudi sources told AL-'ARABI that Saudi security authorities seized a car-bomb near the Defense Ministry building last week and another car-bomb in the Petromin Oil Company parking lot.

In the meantime, investigation teams do not have any clues to determine the ownership of the car-bomb that exploded near the U.S. military mission building in Riyadh. The terrorists had erased the vehicle identification number from the chassis.

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Directive Issued To Arrest Husayn Kamil

NC0212200895 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1910 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 2 Dec (MENA)—The Arab Criminal Police Bureau, which operates under the jurisdiction of the Arab Interior Ministers Council, issued directive 1811/4871 B on 19 October to all Arab police and security departments to arrest Husayn Kamil Hasan on the charge of embezzling Iraqi public funds.

An Interior Ministry source has told INA that follow-up measures are being undertaken with the Interpol General Secretariat with the aim of issuing an international red bulletin against the person in question which will be distributed worldwide.

The source added: The search memorandum issued by the Arab Criminal Police Bureau includes a description of Husayn Kamil and says that he carries Iraqi diplomatic passport number 132/18066, issued in Baghdad on 4 February 1994. The description mentions special facial markings, including a scar left by a surgical operation in his forehead in 1994. The memorandum notes that he currently resides in Jordan.

Users of Unauthorized Bodyguards Face Imprisonment

JN0312201995 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 3 Dec 95

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] At a session this morning under Speaker 'Abd-al-Baqi 'Abd-al-Karim al-Sa'dun, the National Assembly ratified a decree that imposes a sentence of at least one year in prison on whoever imitates state officials' by taking an escort. According to the decree, whoever appears in public with unauthorized bodyguards will be sentenced to a minimum of one year in prison. The same penalty shall apply to the bodyguards.

After elaborate discussions with representatives of the Interior Ministry hosted by the Assembly, members of the National Assembly stressed that imitating state officials by taking an escort has become a daily growing phenomenon, especially among businessmen, artists, tribal chieftains, and officials' sons in a manner that affects social order and disrupts security. Moreover, this phenomenon is sometimes used to conceal certain crimes.

The National Assembly also approved a draft law amending the administrative borders of the Mosul and Tall Kayf districts. According to the draft law, the al-Rashidiyah hamlet is administratively disengaged from the Tall Kayf district and linked with the Mosul district center. The amendment has been necessitated by the fact that the administrative services extended to the al-Rashidiyah hamlet are provided by the Mosul Municipality as an area affiliated with it. In addition, it is part of the basic design of Mosul and has no connection with the Tall Kayf district except for administrative ties.

The IRAQI NEWS AGENCY learned that the National Assembly will hold a session on 5 December to discuss the Local People's Councils draft law.

Paper on 'Rabid' U.S. Moves on Resolution 986

JN0312174095 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0900 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 3 Dec (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH accused the U.S. Administration of launching a rabid aggressive campaign to obstruct the Security Council's work by attempting to activate the unfair Resolution 986 while knowing in advance that Iraq will not accept it because of its mechanism which undermines Iraq's security, sovereignty, and independence.

In an article today, the newspaper, mouthpiece of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, says: It is no longer a secret that Resolution 986 is an attempt to circumvent the implementation of Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687. This paragraph means lifting the blockade imposed on Iraq after it has fulfilled all its commitments.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Through its misleading campaigns, the United States is telling the world that Iraq does not want to benefit from Resolution 986 to purchase food and medicine. The United States, however, is not telling the world that this resolution does not permit Iraq to purchase the commodities listed in the ration card. The Iraqi Government distributes these commodities to citizens in a manner which is unmatched in the whole world.

The paper emphasizes that Resolution 986 constitutes a serious precedent in relations between the UN Security Council and independent states because it implies interference in Iraq's internal affairs. This resolution also permits the importation of a limited quantity of Iraqi oil, which cannot end the minimum level of Iraqis' suffering and which cannot provide them with medicine and food. It also sets as a condition that the greater part of this limited quantity of Iraqi oil should be exported across Turkish territory, which is another serious precedent in dealing with independent and sovereign states.

AL-THAWRAH adds that Resolution 986 permits UN employees to distribute food to part of our Iraqi people through a specific sum taken from oil revenues. This is yet another serious precedent in this resolution.

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The paper asserts that the Iraqis rejected Resolution 986 for these reasons in addition to the fact that Iraq is demanding its right to enjoy its resources exactly like other states. It also discusses the deterioration that afflicted the Iraqi health institutions as a result of the blockade.

The paper says: With regard to its limited action to address the health situation, we find that Resolution 986 can only entrench the serious repercussions of the blockade and perpetuate the latter by obstructing Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687 and impeding the lifting of the blockade imposed on our people.

Concluding, AL-THAWRAH asserts that, as events have confirmed, the U.S. imperialists have failed in their futile plan. This plan hoped that the blockade would prompt the Iraqi people to abandon their national options and their country's independence and sovereignty. For more than five years of the unjust blockade, which has inflicted grave damage on its people, Iraq has proven that it can confront difficulties and preserve its national options and that it is determined to fully regain its rights.

Salih Receives Former French Chief of Staff

JN3011163895 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1420 GMT 30 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 30 Nov (INA)—Trade Minister Muhammad Mahdi Salih today met with General Jeannou Lacaze, former French chief of staff, and his delegation.

During the meeting, they discussed economic ties and the serious consequences of the unfair embargo imposed on the Iraqi people. The French delegation was also briefed on Iraq's ration card experience.

Vice President Receives Algerian Oil Company Team

JN0312190495 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1500 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 3 Dec (INA)—Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan received an Algerian Sonatrach National Enterprise delegation under Abdelmadjid Attar, assistant director general of the enterprise.

During the meeting, Taha Yasin Ramadan praised the developed relations between Iraq and Algeria in all fields. He stressed that oil cooperation between the two sides will further bolster the march of joint relations in the various fields.

The vice president stressed that Iraq and Algeria are oil-rich countries with much expertise in the oil field. He indicated that the Iraqi oil cadres have proven high competence during the era of oil nationalization and the reconstruction of the oil installations destroyed during the U.S.-led 30-state aggression against our steadfast people.

Abdelmadjid Attar stressed that the future of oil cooperation between Iraq and Algeria will be extensive to reflect the two countries' serious desire to promote bilateral cooperation in all fields. The meeting was attended by the Algerian ambassador in Baghdad.

Paper Calls For Reviving Arab-European Dialogue

JN0212133895 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0918 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 2 Dec (INA)—The newspaper BABIL has called for reviving Arab-European dialogue since this dialogue bolsters independent policies, defies U.S. hegemony, and leads to the establishment of a real and just peace on the Arab and European levels.

The paper, published here today, says in an article under the headline "A Better Alternative to the Concepts of Middle Easternism and Mediterraneanism," that divide the Arab homeland and the one Arab nation into geographic groups is not in the interest of the Arabs at all. This is because this weakens the Arab negotiatory position at Middle East or Mediterranean conferences in the interest of the other side.

The paper adds that the Arab side at the Barcelona conference could not oblige the Zionist entity to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty or to bring its nuclear, chemical, and biological arsenal under international monitoring and inspection.

Saddam Chairs Economic, Financial Experts Meeting

JN0212155395 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1538 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 2 Dec (INA)—President Saddam Husayn today chaired a meeting attended by Finance Minister Ahmad Husayn Khudayyir and Trade Minister Muhammad Mahdi Salih.

The meeting was attended by several experts in financial and economic affairs.

Saddam Addresses Cabinet Session on Economy

JN0312145995 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 3 Dec 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Leader President Saddam Husayn, may God preserve him, said that the enemies

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of Iraq have failed to achieve their evil objectives by military means. They also failed in using the international media for more than five years. Our great people surprised them with the most eloquent reply on the Great March Day, when they announced to the whole world that they adhere to this march and to its leadership despite all that the evil ones have massed in terms of material forces, misleading media, the comprehensive blockade, and the wide conspiracy.

He added: These futile ones are now pinning their last hope on the internal economic situation. However, they will fail due to our people's capability of patience and steadfastness and due to the resolve and the faithful, militant, and creative thinking.

This came in a comprehensive and important speech by the leader president, may God watch over him, while chairing the 41st cabinet session. His excellency reviewed his strategic vision regarding the bases to organize the economic life for the phase of the crossing, especially on the occasion of the imminent debate on the state's general budget with its investment and current branches as well as the budgets of the socialist sector.

His excellency said: Among our first tasks now is to confront inflation with all means, curb and reduce the general government expenditure, develop the state's resources, and activate production and services. This should take place without unwarranted increase in costs and expenditure. All management leaders at different levels should improve their managements and installations through the available resources and without any increase. It is at this point that the role of responsible leadership arises. Means and alternatives should be invented and workers should be motivated to do better with the available resources. No department should expend more than its resources or request an increase in the prices of its products or services without checking and examining the direct and indirect costs and methods of work. In no way should administrative faults, such as waste and incompetent use of resources, as well as the auditing of financial and production accounts be concealed.

Addressing the cabinet members, his excellency added: The most important thing in our relationship with our people is to explain to them the current state of affairs with all its dimensions and requirements through party organizations, federations, unions, professional societies, the National Assembly, the local people's councils, and the electronic and press media. When our people are well informed, they will shoulder the burdens with you and support your measures. This will enable us to close the gaps through which the enemy hopes to infiltrate our ranks.

His excellency said: This is a pause to set the home in order by placing everything in its right place, finding a place for everything, organizing the use of resources, controlling costs and waste, and inventing new alternatives. It is aimed at solidifying our edifice so as to make the final crossing with the least amount of scratches, God willing.

Afterward, the Council of Ministers made a number of decisions and took measures in this regard. Accordingly, the Trade Ministry was authorized to increase the supply of durable commodities, spare parts, and construction and other materials from its reserve for direct sale to all citizens at prices 10 percent less than the current market prices.

The Council of Ministers then discussed the Local People's Councils draft law. Speaking on this draft law, the leader president, may God watch over him said: We really count on this law for reasons related to the role of the people and their representatives. We want to expand democratic practice to expand the basis of qualification, and, consequently, the basis of responsibility sharing. In this regard, we must indicate that under the socialist system, the state has greater responsibilities toward establishing social and economic justice and achieving comprehensive development than under the capitalist system. The capitalist system is characterized by giving the minority a chance to control the destiny of the majority. Therefore, these responsibilities cannot be shouldered by a single official irrespective of his capabilities and knowledge. This is because such an official must miss some basic matters, not to mention the loss of the basic principle of collective participation in decisionmaking. Therefore, in this law you find a clear specification of specializations and the hierarchy of responsibilities, beginning with people's councils in subdistricts, up to the people's councils in districts and governorates. Each of these councils has a role to play in observation, supervision, scrutiny, alerting, work, and decisionmaking. In addition, this draft law will ease the government's burdens at the higher echelons, and will improve the state's ability to exercise its responsibilities with greater concentration.

His excellency added: The Local People's Councils draft law has been studied with elaboration and experience more than the National Assembly Law before it was passed in 1980. In light of this experience and development, we will also discuss the National Assembly Law with the same attention before the National Assembly general elections, slated for next year.

After consideration, the Council of Ministers approved the Local People's Councils draft law, which will be referred to the National Assembly for discussion.

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Ministry Teams Accomplish Machine Repair Work

JN3011202295 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 6 Nov 95 p 4

[Report by Subhi Jasim]

[FBIS Translated Text] In implementation of the "Call of the Leader" campaign, engineering and technical teams of the State Enterprise for Maintenance and Operation of Irrigation Projects, which belongs to the Irrigation Ministry, completed maintenance and repair work on a large number of damaged machines and equipment. Deputy Director General Talib Hasan Isma'il said: Our engineering and technical teams completed maintenance and repair on 393 machines and equipment of different types as well as 188 pumping stations, 103 canals and regulators, and 185 headgates. They also carried out maintenance work on electrical equipment, water reservoirs, water filtration systems, furniture, and sanitary ware. Thanks to their personal efforts, the teams accomplished the campaign within the set time limit under the supervision of follow-up committees.

The enterprise is responsible for the maintenance and operation of irrigation projects, such as reservoir dams and hydraulic installations to ensure water needs, control surplus water, and maintain the irrigation and drainage networks which are served by the pumping stations.

First Phase of River Reclamation Project Completed

JN3011214795 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 10 Nov 95 p 4

[Report by Majid al-Baldawi]

[FBIS Translated Text] Maysan — In fulfillment of leader President Saddam Husayn's wishes to reclaim the lands on the banks of the irrigation al-'Izz River, Maysan Governor Ahmad 'Abdallah Salih inaugurated the first phase of a project to reclaim these lands. A ceremony marking the occasion at the work site was attended by a large number of tribesmen.

Project Manager Engineer Sa'di Yadallah Haydar said: The teams of the Higher Committee for Irrigation Projects are continuing their work on this project which will eventually cover an area of 580,000 donums. The project has been divided into several phases and priorities. The workers have so far completed the first phase which consists of building five kilometers of canals and headgates for regulating the flow of water into 44,000 donums of agricultural lands which will be devoted to planting wheat and barley. The work is being carried out by the Engineering Company for Industrial Designs and Constructions and the State al-Jihad Enterprise, which belong to the Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction.

Haydar added: The work involved 1.34 million out of a total of 11 million cubic meters of excavation work. Al-Nasr, al-Qadisiyah, and al-Faw Companies, which belong to the Ministry of Irrigation, are continuing the work of leveling out the reclaimed land, clearing it of bamboo, and preparing it for cultivation with the technical support provided by 200 engineering machines and equipment. It is hoped that this phase of the project will be finally completed in the middle of this month.

Haydar explained that Ashur and al-Tahrir Companies have completed 80 percent of a project to pave the 42-kilometer southern embankment. This embankment will facilitate transportation of agricultural crops and serve resident peasant tribes. The technical and engineering teams of the Department of Electricity in Maysan have also completed the work of supplying electricity power to the residential communities in Abu 'Ajul villages. Power pylons have been erected, wires have been extended, and transformers of different capacities have been installed to ensure this basic service.

Paper Reports on Rice Harvest in al-Qadisiyah

JN3011214295 Baghdad AL-QADISIYAH in Arabic 6 Nov 95 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] Al-Diwaniyah — This rice harvesting and marketing campaign has begun in al-Qadisiyah Governorate. Husayn Muhammad Khalaf al-Rikabi, head of the Department of Agriculture in the governorate, said all the necessary requirements, including oils, fuel, greases, and spare parts for the 151 harvesters taking part in the campaign, have been insured, maintenance and repair shops have been set up, and 14 marketing centers have been opened throughout the governorate.

The al-Qadisiyah branch of the State Company for Grain Trading has also made all the necessary arrangements to receive this year's rice from the peasants and farmers in the governorate. Making this announcement, branch Manager Sa'd Shakir Shannin said that he has arranged all facilities, including the employees who will receive the crop at the marketing centers and silos.

The branch manager urged all peasants and farmers to make sure that their crops are free of impurities and sand so as to qualify for the awards to be granted by the state.

AL-QADISIYAH came second in grain marketing last year.

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KDP Forces Said To Violate Cease-Fire Agreement

NC0112160395 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] At 1030 today, the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] forces shelled the positions of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] forces in the Hasarut combat line. The KDP forces used mortars and DShK-38 machine guns in their attack, which caused no casualties.

The KDP attack on our forces' positions today is a new violation of the cease-fire agreement signed between the two sides.

Radio Reports Exchange of Fire With PUK

JN0112214295 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] On the night of 29/30 November, the Union [Patriotic Union of Kurdistan—PUK] armed elements shelled the villages of (Saybardan) and Maydan which are close to (Kaslazal), using Mortars and DShK machine guns, injuring a civilian. Our hero peshmerga responded and silenced the Union shelling.

KDP Forces Detail Attacks on PKK Positions

JN3011190895 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1800 GMT 30 Nov 95

[All placenames as heard]

[FBIS Translated Text] A heroic peshmerga force of the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] confronted a detachment of the Kurdistan Workers Party [PKK] near the village of Karlabat on the evening of 29 November. In a one-hour clash, our heroes dealt a fatal blow to the aggressors. The clashes left 10 PKK gunmen dead. As a result, the KDP peshmerga seized 10 Kalashnikov rifles, one rocket-propelled grenade [RPG], and some ammunition and military hardware. The remnants of the PKK forces fled the scene of clashes.

Another force of our party confronted another group of terrorists in the Hert plain on the evening of 28 November. Our peshmerga showered them with a barrage of fire and pursued the defeated remnants, who left behind 13 dead. Our peshmerga seized three kalashnikov rifles and one RPG.

On the evening of 29 November, a heroic force of the KDP peshmerga launched a heroic campaign in the strait of Alana and Shaykh Zardakan to purge the area of PKK terrorists. Our heroes dealt a fatal blow to the enemies and taught them another eloquent lesson. The number of casualties is yet to be determined.

On 28 November, several PKK terrorists who infiltrated the Barazgar plain were ambushed by KDP peshmerga. The PKK terrorists sustained grave losses. They fled the scene of clashes, but only after they left four dead behind. One PKK terrorist was captured. Our peshmerga seized several pieces of weapons and military hardware.

On the evening of the same day, a heroic force of our peshmerga launched an attack on [word indistinct] used by PKK terrorists in the plains of Wayn and Jerwin Khalit, inflicted grave losses on them, and forced them to flee the scene, leaving behind three dead and a large amount of weapons and ammunition.

Barzani Party Envoy Meets Jordan Envoy to Ankara

JN0112204395 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1800 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother (Safin Busay), our [Kurdistan Democratic] Party representative in Ankara, paid a visit to the embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in Turkey on 30 November. He was cordially received by Jordanian Ambassador Salih al-Kabariti. Talks lasted for one hour during which the most important regional developments were discussed and views were exchanged on these developments.

INC Head Supports Territorial Integrity

NC2711213195 Istanbul CUMHURIYET in Turkish 24 Nov 95 p 11

[Report by Lale Sariibrahimoglu: "Assurance for Ankara on Workers Party of Kurdistan"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Irbil—Dr. Ahmad Chalabi, leader of the National Congress of Iraq [INC], has said that northern Iraq must not be an area that poses a threat to Turkey's border security. He said: "We condemn the terrorist attacks against Turkey from Iraq's territory."

Chalabi secretly visited Turkey just before the third round of talks held in northern Iraq through U.S. mediation for a reconciliation among the Kurdish groups last week. He met a group of Turkish correspondents at the INC headquarters in Irbil. However, he declined to confirm his visit to Turkey. Chalabi said: "The maintenance of Iraq's territorial integrity is closely linked with the maintenance of Turkey's territorial integrity. By safeguarding Iraq's territorial integrity, we are contributing toward the maintenance of Turkey's territorial integrity."

A correspondent recalled that Democratic Party of Kurdistan [DPK] leader Mas'ud Barzani and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan leader Jalal Talabani support the establishment of a federal state in Iraq. Chalabi responded by

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saying that the Iraqi people must decide the future of Iraq. He asserted: "Barzani and Talabani are leading officials in Iraq. The people will decide the future of Iraq when free elections are held. I do not believe that Iraq's leaders will want to decide the country's future by themselves. The approach that will be adopted must be in accordance with the people's wishes and Iraq's relations with its neighbors."

Chalabi recalled that his father visited Turkey when he served as the leader of the Senate in Iraq. Asked whether he wanted to serve as Iraq's prime minister in the future, he said: "That will be decided by the Iraqi people."

Chalabi said that any move to justify the Workers Party of Kurdistan [PKK] attacks on the DPK's territory constitutes a threat to Iraq's territorial integrity. He also said that he has not been informed about the deployment of the Badar forces in northern Iraq, which are affiliated with the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq.

A correspondent recalled that the INC has been established as an alternative to the Baghdad Administration and asked whether or not the failure to oust Saddam Husayn showed that he still enjoys strong support. Chalabi responded by saying that he does not share this view.

Oppositionists View King Husayn's Plan for 'Front'

NC0112125795 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 23 Nov 95 p 8

[Report by 'Abdallah 'Abd-al-Salam in London]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a new development in the Iraqi crisis, a prominent Iraqi oppositionist has revealed that King Husayn of Jordan is trying to establish a unified Iraqi opposition front that will be based in Amman with a view to setting up a government in exile to overthrow Saddam Husayn's regime.

Layth Kubbah [name as published], an Islamist Iraqi opposition figure, has told AL-AHRAM that King Husayn, who is currently on a private visit to Britain, met London-based Iraqi opposition leaders there. An envoy of King Husayn, Muhammad 'Ali, met other Iraqi opposition leaders within this framework. Kubbah noted that King Husayn meets with and listens to Iraqis of various inclinations. He has instructed his agencies to familiarize themselves with the Iraqis' problems. Kubbah added that King Husayn will then adopt the cause of Iraq, not nominally or media-wise, but through a series of measures yet to be announced.

Kubbah pointed out that the Iraqi opposition seeks to move its center of authority from the Salah al-Din area in northern Iraq, where experience has proved it to be unsuccessful, to the Jordanian capital of Amman. This would be the prelude to setting up a government [in exile] that would bring together, not only politicians, but also technocrats and administrators, who will take it upon themselves to run Iraq's affairs later.

Asked by AL-AHRAM if the United States and Britain have given their approval to the new Iraqi [opposition] approach, Kubbah said: I believe everyone realizes that there is a vacuum in Iraq and that Jordan can play a role to end the crisis there.

But Muhammad al-Zahir, the leader of the Union of Iraqi Democrats in London, told AL-AHRAM it is not yet clear what the new Jordanian measures will be. He said King Husayn and an envoy of his contacted Shiite Islamic opposition figures, who encouraged him to lead a campaign to unseat Saddam Husayn. He noted that the other Iraqi opposition parties, such as the democrats, secularists, and communists, believe that if the Jordanian effort treats Iraq along the lines of the Shiites and Sunnis, they will not accept the Jordanian initiative. But if it seeks to bring together all the factions and inclinations of the Iraqi people, then there is no problem.

Al-Zahir pointed out that there is implicit U.S. and British approval for a Jordanian role in Iraq. He noted that the recent improvement in Jordan's ties with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait comes in this regard. He added that regional states, such as Syria and Egypt, are opposed to the Jordanian effort.

Opposition Figures Assail King Husayn's Initiative

NC0312205895 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 3 Dec 95

[Telephone interview with "Abu-Ayyub," representative of the Iraqi Democrats Federation in Syria, and "William," representative of the Iraqi Assyrian Movement, by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given—live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent] As you have heard, Jordan's King Husayn announced in his speech that he will work to liberate the Iraqi people from their current suffering and will provide them with a means of living like other nations. As part of the opposition, how do you view the Jordanian king's statement?

[Abu-Ayyub] First of all, King Husayn is a leader who is completely hostile to the Iraqi people and their goals and ambitions. This king has harbored hidden animosity toward Iraq since the 14 July revolution leaders liquidated the royal family.

In his latest moves, King Husayn... [pauses] Of course this is in addition to all his crimes and sins against Iraq

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and the Iraqi people by supporting the tyrant Saddam Husayn in his war on the Muslim neighbor Iran and in his occupation of Kuwait and in the tragedies and woes he caused our Iraqi people and Arabs and Muslims.

A ruler of this kind cannot have mercy and sympathy for the Iraqi people. In his latest move, he and the Zionists and Western countries seek to completely destroy, exhaust, and starve out Iraq and drag it into the current settlement process in the Middle East, as you know. The objective is that as a result of starvation and tragedies, Iraq would link up with the Middle East settlement process. This is my view of King Husayn's latest move.

[Correspondent] In your opinion, the Jordanian king's steps toward liberating the Iraqi people are not serious as much as they seek to achieve Zionist goals in secret.

[Abu-Ayyub] Exactly, exactly. King Husayn is not serious about liberating Iraq. Iraq will be liberated by the people and the struggling nationalist forces of Iraq, which have offered thousands of martyrs and sacrifices over tens of years. Liberating the Iraqi people is a task for the Iraqi people. As for this king, in the recent past he was on Saddam Husayn's side. He even intervened in his internal family affairs and arbitrated their problems. How can he become for the Iraqi people overnight and opposed to Saddam Husayn? This move cannot fool any rational person, be he an Iraqi, Arab, Muslim, or anyone.

My dear brother, on this occasion I address a call and an appeal to every loyal Iraqi and every nationalist concerned about Iraq and its people to guard against this king's moves. I also address a call to all regional forces concerned about the Iraqi people to help the nationalist movement and the Iraqi people so as to avoid the potential results of the suspect moves and steps by King Husayn and those who are with him. With great regret, especially some of those who are regarded as members of the Iraqi opposition, who until very recently were pillars of the Iraqi regime and who are now backing King Husayn in his suspect move.

[Correspondent] Does the king's speech mean that he is going ahead with the federation project which he proposed recently to solve the Iraqi issue?

[Abu-Ayyub] I believe that King Husayn will try once, twice, three, and four times for the sake of those who tasked him with this mission. Of course King Husayn has papers, tools, and some Iraqi tribal men and leaders and, with great regret, he also has some religious men. He has some politicians now cooperating with him on this project whom I can only, regrettably, describe as mercenaries.

Yes, King Husayn is trying and will continue trying but, God willing, he will fail because the Iraqi people are noble and have a heritage and experience. They cannot be fooled by moves carried out by King Husayn or anyone else in our Arab and Islamic world, specifically in Iraq.

[Correspondent] As you are aware, Jordan's King Husayn announced in his speech that he will work to liberate the Iraqi people from their current suffering and will provide them with opportunities to live like the rest of the nations. As the opposition, how do you view the Jordanian king's statement?

[William] As party to the Iraqi opposition and as an [word indistinct] Assyrian movement, we do not support Iraq's partitioning into a center, south, and north. Our stands are always supportive of Iraq's unity and national unity in Iraq.

[Correspondent] So you understand from King Husayn's speech that he aims to implement his recently proposed project, the project of federalism

[William] We recently received information that he wants to sound out the opposition figures' views so that afterward he can launch another plan and proposals. His plan did not get support from the opposition or from numerous Iraqi opposition factions because, in particular, we do not accept Iraq's partitioning.

As Assyrian people, we believe that partitioning Iraq will lead to dividing our people.

[Correspondent] Does the king's speech mean that he is pressing ahead with the federalism plan to solve Iraq's crisis as we mentioned?

[William] I believe not. He has revoked his plan. According to my information he made such a proposal but it might have been a propaganda bombshell to sound out the views of the Iraqi opposition and the Iraqi opposition figures.

[Correspondent] So he sought to test the opposition. Is it your view that if some opposition parties agree, he might pursue his efforts on this?

[William] Possibly. I believe that it was just a test to see at what point the opposition would agree to his plan. It was a test to see whether half or three-fourths of the opposition would agree so that he could pursue his course. He realized that numerous Iraqi opposition factions did not back the plan and were supportive of Iraq's unity. So he might change his mind about the plan and decide something else and seek the views of Iraqi figures. He has met with Iraqi opposition figures in London. He might pursue another path.

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Peres To Raise Defense Pact in Clinton Talks

TA0312121995 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 3 Dec 95 p A1

[Report by Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres, who is scheduled to visit Washington soon, will convene a consultation this week in order to examine the proposals for upgrading U.S.-Israeli strategic ties. The discussion will address the possibility of signing a bilateral defense pact that would include a U.S. commitment to protect Israel if the latter is attacked, similar to the U.S. assurances given to NATO members.

The agenda of Peres' meeting with U.S. President Bill Clinton has not been set yet, but a senior political source said yesterday: "This visit will establish the patterns for cooperation and the nature of the relationship in the coming years."

The Foreign Ministry has launched staff work to examine the possibility of signing a defense pact with the United States and to assess the alternatives, which consist of upgrading the U.S. commitment to Israel's security and enhancing the strategic ties in the context of comprehensive peace in the Middle East. The work was launched in the wake of remarks by Senator Robert Dole, the Senate majority leader and the leading Republican candidate for the U.S. Presidency, on the need to upgrade the strategic ties with Israel.

Israeli sources noted that Dole's observation came in the wake of talks with members of the pro-Israeli lobby in Washington who sought to seize the opportunity of the change of government in Israel to raise proposals designed to enhance the U.S. commitment.

Itamar Rabinovich, Israel's ambassador to the United States, asked Peres to hold a discussion in a bid to formulate an official Israeli stand on this issue in anticipation of the Washington visit, during which the prime minister will hold talks with Clinton and Dole.

Similar proposals for upgrading the strategic ties, including a defense pact, were raised during Yitzhaq Rabin's premiership, but Rabin voiced reservations about them, maintaining that Israel must defend itself. Furthermore, he prevented the implementation of the agreement with the United States on convening a joint strategic forum at a ministerial level.

There is prevailing opposition in the defense establishment to an official defense pact with the United States. Defense Ministry Director General David 'Ivri, who heads the Strategic Cooperation Committee, said in the past that such a pact would greatly infringe on Israel's freedom of military action and would prompt a reduction in military aid and pressure to disarm Israel of its deterrent capability. 'Ivri has reservations about any discussion of the possibility of signing a defense pact.

Conversely, a position paper drafted by the Foreign Ministry last year states that a defense pact would significantly and vitally increase Israel's deterrent capability. The paper's author suggested that the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] freedom of action be preserved and that Israel refrain from signing a defense pact that would guarantee U.S. troop deployment in defense of Israel and settle instead for a contractual commitment to expand the U.S. "nuclear umbrella" to cover Israel.

Strategic ties between the United States and Israel were founded in a series of memorandums of understanding (documents signed by the U.S. President that do not require Congress' approval). The two countries established a joint political-military forum which convenes twice a year. The U.S. Army holds joint exercises with the IDF, and U.S. Army troops visit Israel. The United States pledged to assist Israel by transporting supplies in emergencies ("airlifts") and by providing early warnings on missile launches. During the Gulf war, the United States sent Patriot missile batteries and hundreds of soldiers to protect Israeli cities from the Iraqi Scud missiles.

Envoy: U.S. Unsure of al-Asad Peace Intentions

TA0312100295 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 3 Dec 95 p 11

[Report by political correspondent Shim'on Schiffer]

[FBIS Translated Text] In anticipation of Dr. Dennis Ross' arrival in the region tomorrow, political sources voiced low expectations yesterday regarding the possibility of a breakthrough in the Israeli-Syrian negotiations.

Ross' first stop will be in Damascus; he will arrive in Israel in midweek.

Israeli Ambassador in Washington Itamar Rabinovich has sent a report to Jerusalem in which he writes that despite the positive signs emanating from Damascus over the past few days, the U.S. Administration has formed the opinion that it is still impossible to tell whether President al-Asad has indeed reached the conclusion that this is the last opportunity to facilitate an arrangement with Israel prior to the elections in Israel and the United States.

A senior political source in Jerusalem said yesterday that "al- Asad is the same al-Asad; therefore, the chances of his agreeing to hold a public meeting with an Israeli figure are minimal."

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Sources close to Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq say that Israel will examine the proposals for an arrangement with Syria from the viewpoint of both the timing of the elections, which are getting closer, and the impact of such an arrangement on Labor's reelection chances.

It has been learned that Prime Minister Shim'on Peres will draft a position paper this week regarding Israel's conditions for an arrangement with Syria and will submit it to President Clinton at the White House. Peres will propose to the Americans that the negotiations be resumed on all the components of the arrangement rather than settling for talks between military experts on the security arrangements.

Editorial Comments Favorably on Clinton

TA0312091995 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 3 Dec 95 p 6

[Editorial: "Peacemaker president"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] For a man once assessed as uninterested in foreign affairs, President Bill Clinton is rapidly heading for the history books as a peacemaker president. Only time will tell whether he will chalk up a formidable list of successes in this field, or whether his valiant efforts will unravel amid the intractable historical bitterness inherent in the world's trouble spots.

The cynical assessment that he is already electioneering in the Irish- and Jewish-American hinterlands has been made by more than one commentator. The short answer to the charge is that if he is, then so what? Even fervent members of the anti-Clinton camp had to admit that he looked every inch the international statesman before the tumultuous crowds in Derry and Dublin.

This came only a month after he gave Israelis the enduring slogan Shalom, haver [good-bye, friend], with his moving personal response to the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. If the people of Ireland and Israel have taken him to their hearts in such measure, Clinton must surely be doing something right. And if he is doing something right, there is nothing wrong with being rewarded by Irish- and Jewish-American votes come election time.

It is well recorded that Clinton has always regarded John F. Kennedy as his political ideal and, though his Irish links are somewhat more tenuous than Kennedy's were, it was clear from the reception he received in Dublin that he had succeeded in repeating Kennedy's triumphant visit to Ireland in 1963.

If winning votes in the countries most friendly to the United States were all Clinton was about, some cynicism might be understandable. But there are few votes in Bosnia, and Clinton's determination to take the huge political gamble of sending American troops to Bosnia and Croatia at this time is the true measure of his sincerity and leadership. The Dayton peace plan is unpopular in Sarajevo and the sending of American voters' sons and daughters to the Balkans could be extremely unpopular at home.

The methods of implementation of Clinton's peace plans may have their critics. But the consistent reiteration of his call for old enemies to try to look at each other in a different light for the sake of their children's future cannot be dismissed as unrealistic idealism when it is getting results.

One British commentator yesterday called Clinton's visit to Ireland insulting and humiliating to British interests. It is just such entrenched attitudes that need changing in most of the world's conflicts. Clinton asked the republican Irish who have "more physical and emotional space" to help the embattled Protestant Unionists in Northern Ireland to feel less threatened and surrounded. It was a comment that brought him massive applause and it is a plea which will undoubtedly be remembered and heeded.

Equally impressive was the enthusiastic reception Clinton received from his American troops in Germany, with his stirring call for them to go into Bosnia "not to war, but to peace." This was added to an order to respond "immediately and with decisive force" if they are threatened.

All too often, the world does not recognize leadership until the leader is gone. Now is the time for Clinton to be given his due credit as one of the most skillful and humane international presidents the US has produced.

Grachev 'Angrily' Denies Russia To Buy Weapons

TA0412124995 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 4 Nov 95 p 12

[Report by Steve Rodan]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev yesterday angrily denied a report that Moscow had agreed to buy weapons from Israel.

"This is a complete lie," Grachev said during a tour of military bases in the North.

Grachev, speaking two days after he signed a memorandum of understanding on defense cooperation with Israel, was referring to a broadcast on Israel Radio's Russian service that Moscow planned to buy missiles and tanks from Israel. "I must say that this broadcast was not friendly and did damage," Grachev said.

He maintained that Russia and Israel did not sign any secret agreement or additional documents other

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than the two-year defense accord on Friday. He said both countries will explore cooperation, but have not committed to anything specific.

"There are interests, but there is no formal agreement," said Grachev. "We want to cooperate with all the countries in the region and not only with traditional partners," Grachev said. "We would like to start cooperation for the specific purpose of consolidating real peace in the region."

Grachev was briefed by senior IDF [Israel Defense Forces] commanders on the tensions in southern Lebanon, as well as on the strategic importance of the Golan Heights. He sidestepped questions on Russia's position regarding the Golan, saying he would not discuss political issues.

Jordan Envoy Views Expectations, Normalization

TA0312124895 Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew 3 Dec 95 p 4

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Jordanian ambassador, Dr. Marwan al- Mu'ashshir, said on 1 December that over 20 Jordanian-Israeli cooperation agreements — most notably in tourism, agriculture, and industry spheres — have been signed since the Amman conference.

Addressing the Industrial and Commercial Club at the Sheraton Hotel in Tel Aviv, the ambassador summed up the period of over a year since the two countries signed a peace treaty. He admitted that both sides had had high expectations, not all of which have materialized. He maintained that the Israelis had expected an acceleration in trade and economic ties, while the Jordanians had hoped for a better life.

The ambassador said that although Jordanian businessmen maintain ties with Israeli counterparts, they are afraid that the experienced Israeli industry will swallow up the young, newly established Jordanian industry. He hoped these fears would evaporate when the Jordanian entrepreneurs realize that they can only benefit from ties with Israel.

On the political level, Ambassador al-Mu'ashshir noted that despite all the agreements signed between the two countries in vital fields of activity, there are still two unresolved issues: refugees and Jerusalem. He said these two problems hinder full normalization, although he is confident that they, too, will be solved eventually.

Al-Mu'ashshir further said that the assassination of Yitzhaq Rabin provoked some soul-searching in Jordan, similar to that in Israel, particularly among the silent majority who had doubts about the process of normalization between Jordan and Israel and who felt apprehensive and disappointed when their expectations for immediate change were dashed. He noted that he expects relations between the two countries to change for the better after the assassination and that there is even a possibility of establishing a joint front of peace supporters against the opposition in both nations.

In reply to a question as to why the intellectuals, of all Jordanians, are most vehemently opposed to the peace process with Israel, al-Mu'ashshir replied: "The truth is that the Jordanian intellectuals have accepted the idea of a peace treaty based on the Madrid Conference, but they are still opposed to the quick normalization with Israel and claim that Jordan cannot achieve normalization with Israel without the other Arab countries in the region, particularly the Palestinians."

The ambassador added that Jordanian intellectuals perceive the process as too rapid and oppose it on these grounds. The ambassador stressed: "They have no real alternative, however, and they will come to accept normalization after they learn that the move has greatly benefited Jordan, as it has Israel."

Beilin 'Not Too Optimistic' for Peace With Syria

TA0412080895 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 4 Dec 95

[Telephone interview with Yosi Beilin, minister in the Prime Minister's Office, by Mikha Friedman and Ya'el Qovetz; place not given — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Friedman] Good morning, Minister Beilin.

[Beilin] Good morning.

[Friedman] Dennis Ross, who is due in the region today, is driven by the impression that the Syrian attitude towards the peace process, as reflected recent remarks in Damascus, is somehow new and encouraging. Do you also feel this gust of fresh wind?

[Beilin] I can hardly say I see any [word indistinct] here. I think we are almost out of time, but something can still happen if the Syrians come to their senses and if the Americans are prepared to make a very intense effort. The recent tone in Syria is slightly different, but I have to confess that I find their willingness to look us straight in the eye at an international event — while omitting any mention of Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's assassination — hardly exciting.

[Friedman] Despite what you just said, Prime Minister Shim'on Peres will give Bill Clinton a document your people have been drafting here recently, announcing the

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price Israel is willing to pay for peace. How detailed is this price list?

[Beilin] I do not know if there will be a written document. I do not think the price is the key issue right now. I think, for us, the procedures with the Syrians are much more problematic at the moment. Basically, the moment we said that the depth of our withdrawal on the Golan Heights will equal the depth of peace, we more or less defined the price parameters.

[Friedman] Will there be no specifications beyond this definition of price?

[Beilin] I do not think we have to say anything else. The main question is how to establish a serious dialogue, and not how to continue a negotiating game that has been going on since 1991 with hardly any achievements at all.

[Qovetz] And speaking of a serious dialogue, does Peres plan to ask Ross to upgrade the talks with the Syrians to the ministerial level, and is such a request realistic?

[Beilin] We will definitely reiterate our demand for negotiations on a senior political level. Again, I am not too optimistic. The Syrians keep stressing their reservations about direct talks on a senior level, and I think the Americans will still have to undertake most of the effort. The question that interests me most at the moment is to what extent the Americans are willing to step up their involvement at this late hour.

[Qovetz] Do you mean economic promises to Syria? What does Israel expect the Americans to do at this stage?

[Beilin] I was not referring to anything substantial or anything beyond procedural matters. I think a more intense American shuttle tour — and there have been none of those so far; there have been merely trips of a day or two to the region — provided the Syrians consent to high-level political talks, will possibly give us a clearer picture of the actual situation.

[Friedman] It is believed in Washington — as their newspapers report — that Israel is ready to waive its demand for early warning stations on the Golan.

[Beilin] I do not think this leak is based in fact. These are just rumors, and if you ask me, I do not think this issue is the crux of the negotiations. I think the negotiations should be much broader. The exact agenda and the proposed solution need to be defined, and I believe a solution is possible. Paradoxically, the procedures are much more complex than the solution itself. [passage omitted]

[Friedman] Mr. Beilin, you said at the beginning of this conversation that you thought the time for negotiations with Syria has almost run out. Why do you think that?

[Beilin] Because the American election year, which usually starts very early, is near, and because I think a great deal will depend on the Americans, since the Syrians never accepted the idea of holding direct, high-level talks with us. If we get to the point where the Americans are unable to intervene because of their domestic politics, the talks will not make any serious progress. That was why I always thought that 1995 was the last year for a real chance for negotiations with Syria. It may be possible to drag them out for a few more months in 1996, but I have to admit it seems very difficult. I think that at present the Americans are willing to give a dramatic Israeli-Syrian move another chance. If they reach the conclusion that it is difficult or impossible, I do not think they will give it another chance during this term.

[Friedman] Thank you very much, Minister Yosi Beilin.

Baraq on Syria, Palestinian Talks, Hizballah

TA0112194195 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 1 Dec 95

[Interview with Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq by Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari on 1 December; place not given — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Ya'ari] Were the public events we observed at the Barcelona conference this week just the tip of the iceberg? Are there secret contacts with Syria?

[Baraq] There is a great deal of expectation about the possibility of an arrangement with the Syrians and, from that point of view, things are happening, but I would not say that at this stage there is any part of the iceberg that cannot be seen. Do not forget that prior to Barcelona, the Syrians did not attend either the multilateral talks or the Amman conference. Therefore, their appearance at the Barcelona conference was something of a novelty, but it is being studied from all angles. Shim'on Peres is preparing for his visit to Washington, and the Syrians should also assess the possibilities.

[Ya'ari] I understand that there was some sort of preparation that preceded the exchange of public appeals between you and Faruq al-Shar' in Barcelona.

[Baraq] I do not want to go into that. There were no real preparations regarding the content of the appeals.

[Ya'ari] But it was not a total surprise to the Syrians.

[Baraq] As I noted previously, since the Syrians did not attend the multilaterals and the Amman conference

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but did come to Barcelona, the hosts and others were obviously sensitive to the possibility that it might cause damage rather than contribute something. What in fact happened was that a small, symbolic, and initial but not valueless step has been taken toward if not rapprochement, at least a serious study of the matter.

[Ya'ari] It seems that the government is about to drop the previous government's condition that the Syrians first send officers to Washington before the negotiations can be resumed. That means you are talking about a change of format and, from the prime minister's remarks in MA'ARIV today, I understand that there might also be a change in location.

[Baraq] At the same time, I think the officers talks are important. I do not know what format will be chosen in the long run; it also depends on the Syrians. I tell you, however, that I sat for many hours with Chief of Staff Hikmat al-Shihabi, the No. 2 man in Syria. During all those hours, we tried to find out from the Syrians the link between the different components — between normalization and the security arrangements and the timetables and the depth of the withdrawal — and we did not find a readiness to discuss it all as a package. I would also stress that in order to avoid giving the impression that we are the only ones to decide things, we reiterated to the Syrians that we are not handing them a dictate or even a recipe but only some notes or ideas to which they can contribute and present other ideas, but that the whole package has to be resolved.

[Ya'ari] Can you imagine anything happening with the Syrians that you as foreign minister do not know about? I ask because Prime Minister Shim'on Peres said that he found in the late Prime Minister Rabin's drawers plans he knew nothing about.

[Baraq] I am sure that I know and will continue to know everything happening on all tracks of Israel's foreign policy....

[Ya'ari, interrupting] Do you have such a promise?

[Baraq] I do not need such a promise. I have such an understanding, but in my relations with Shim'on, even that is not needed, because it is obvious. I tell you that I do not feel there was anything I did not know about when Rabin was alive.

[Ya'ari] At the time, you were not overly enthusiastic about setting up the security zone in south Lebanon in its present format. We have had another week of heavy shelling. How do you think Israel should react now? Should it reconsider the concept of the security zone?

[Baraq] No, not now, definitely not because of the latest events. On the operational level, it is being dealt with by the IDF [Israel Defense Forces], the defense establishment, and the SLA [South Lebanese Army]. On the political level, I believe it will be added to the discussions in the Syrian context, because it is connected. I do not think that the Syrians knew or ordered the shelling. In that sense, they are not directly responsible. But to us, Syria is the address because it is known to all that if Syria wants, it can restrain not only the katyusha shelling but Hizballah activity in general.

[Ya'ari] If they continue to force Galilee residents to take to the shelters, will you recommend a sharper military reaction?

[Baraq] I am sure it is clear to the Syrians, the Lebanese Government, and, of course, Hizballah that if this situation continues, it could lead to an escalation of IDF activity in Lebanon.

[Ya'ari] Mr. Foreign Minister, you abstained in the cabinet vote on Oslo B. In recent days, we once again had incidents in Janin, Nabulus, and other locations in the territories. Are there amendments we should consider adding to the interim accord?

[Baraq] I did not abstain in the vote on Oslo B but in the vote on the guidelines issued to Uri Savir and Abu-'Ala [Ahmad Quray'] on how to discuss the agreement.

From my discussions with 'Arafat three or four days ago, I know it is clear to him and his people that the implementation of Oslo B is a test for both sides. The main test they have to face is firm, uncompromising treatment of terrorism, not only after the fact but also a genuine, relentless effort to uproot or reduce it before anything happens.

Even in the pullout from Gaza, there were many misunderstandings and incidents at first which almost led the Palestinian police to open fire on us and us on them. There were also casualties when we controlled the entire area. Nonetheless, the latest incidents are very grave, and in my view, 'Arafat has no misunderstanding about the gravity with which we view the matter, about our resolve in our demand that terrorism be fought, and, I would even add, about the possible repercussions regarding the continued implementation of the accord if he does not meet these tests.

[Ya'ari] In conclusion, do you enjoy your new job and wearing a diplomat's suit?

[Baraq] I do not know if the word enjoy is suitable, certainly not under the circumstances that got me the job — Yitzhaq Rabin's assassination, which I cannot get out of my mind — but I am very aware of the great responsibility and I cannot say it is not exciting and engrossing.

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Minister Or on 'Terrorism' in Lebanon, Territories

TA0212140495 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0800 GMT 2 Dec 95

[Studio interview with Deputy Defense Minister Ori Or by correspondent 'Adi Talmor — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Talmor] When Hizballah receives the Israeli Government's message that there is no instant solution, no one-time operation, does it mean that it can continue firing katyushas at Israeli settlements undisturbed?

[Or] No, I do not think so. I believe that the message Hizballah has received and will receive is that we are in a state of war. We cannot solve the overall problem because Syria is involved, but Hizballah will continue paying the consequences. Let me tell you, Hizballah has suffered a great deal over the past several weeks. We, perhaps justifiably, always count our casualties and look at the destroyed houses. Hizballah, however, has sustained fatalities among its casualties. Naturally, I will not consider this sufficient as long as katyushas are being fired at the northern settlements.

[Talmor] Is this the reason for last week's wide and extensive Hizballah attack?

[Or] We believe so. At the same time, this is a clear violation of the understandings. The understandings that were signed, or rather stated, by the Syrians, Hizballah, and the Americans stipulate that no party is to harm civilians. We have not harmed civilians except for during combat in the security zone. The level of katyusha firing has risen over the past several weeks. Hizballah is frequently firing katyushas for, let us say, local rather than strategic purposes.

[Talmor] What you are saying sounds like a recommendation to immediately change the understandings made in the wake of Operation Accountability.

[Or] I did not say immediately, but it may well be that we will have no choice and be forced to launch a series of operations. They will not really solve the problem because, as we said before, it cannot be solved in one fell swoop, but they may lead to longer cease-fire periods.

[Talmor] Could you give us a clue about what such operations might be? Will we harm Lebanese citizens in south Lebanon?

[Or] I do not wish to give hints. We always speak about the responsibility of the Syrian Government. We cite examples in which the Lebanese Government wanted to deploy its army in the south and the Syrians prevented it from doing so; we say that when Syria so wanted, the area became quieter. I, however, believe that we can make demands, albeit small, of the Lebanese Government. There are hundreds of thousands of Lebanese citizens who work their land north of the security zone. Many of them, willingly or not, give shelter to the Hizballah terrorists....

[Talmor, interrupting] Are you speaking of an imminent Operation Accountability II?

[Or] I am not in the habit of speaking to the media about military operations, and there is no need for an Operation Accountability II or whatever name you choose.

[Talmor] What then?

[Or] I will not say here. I say that there might be a situation in which we would have to launch activities that would make the Lebanese and Syrian Governments, as well as Hizballah, understand that if the situation they have been imposing on us over the past several weeks continues, they will pay an even more painful price than they have so far.

[Talmor] What situation are you referring to? Will another katyusha attack such as last week's do it?

[Or] I will not go into details, although you are trying hard. It could be another katyusha volley. It could be a situation where katyushas are not fired, but our citizens are held hostage and sit in shelters for long periods, for example.

[Talmor] You must, however, be aware of the fact that some claim that the residents of the north are the victims of the government's efforts to attain an agreement with Syria and that, in fact, they are not being given appropriate protection for fear of harming the chances of attaining such an arrangement.

[Or] This is nonsense, and I told the Knesset as much last week. The State of Israel today — and I am saying this as deputy defense minister — has and will go on doing everything it considers operationally correct to protect its soldiers in the security zone and its citizens in the northern settlements. The only considerations that determine whether or not military activity is carried out are the intelligence information we have and the existence of reasonable conditions in which to perform it. There is no connection whatsoever between the nonexistent peace process and....

[Talmor, interrupting] No connection?

[Or] There is absolutely no connection between protecting our settlements in the north and the lives of our soldiers in Lebanon — listen closely — and that process, which, in fact, does not exist. After all, there is no peace process between us and the Syrians. I repeat — our only

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guideline for military activity in Lebanon is the operational situation, and it is not related to negotiations with Syria. If the Israeli Government were to think, as you mentioned when we started our discussion, that it should react differently in order to score more successes, it will do so.

[Talmor] Mr. Or, knowing this is a question a nonbeliever would ask, could you please tell us why we are still in Lebanon? After all, Hizballah has been saying explicitly that if Israel pulls out of Lebanon, there would be no more problems between us. Why, then, do we not leave?

[Or] Listen, if the Lebanese Government deploys its army in the south and disarms Hizballah, and we see six months of quiet, we will change our deployment. We have no business being in the security zone. Still, anyone who thinks that the right thing to do — and I have been hearing people speaking of this, and I believe they are wrong — is to undertake a one-sided withdrawal from the security zone, before a solution is attained, is simply being naive. It would be naive to believe that after we withdraw, there would be no Hizballah, Amal, or Palestinian squads firing at Qiryat Shemona and Manara and there would be no intrusions into our territory. We have seen this before when they sat immediately across from our border fence.

I wish to remind you: They used to say — let us pull out of Gaza before attaining a solution. I said then: I do not believe we should stay in Gaza, but we should leave only after reaching a solution that would be the light at the end of the tunnel. A one-sided withdrawal from south Lebanon is not that light.

[Talmor] Let us talk some of Judaea and Samaria. The 29 and 30 November incidents in Janin show that, in fact, the agreement with the Palestinians is not very firm: An armed militia set up roadblocks and kidnapped Israelis, a terrorist who was supposed to be held in Jericho was found elsewhere, and an armed squad again fired at an Israeli car. How do you explain this?

[Or] First, this is certainly very grave, and I believe and regret to say that there will be more such incidents which, I hope, will end without casualties. At the same time, let me tell you that if the events you mentioned are an indication of a growing trend involving such activities, naturally the agreement will stop. I, however, believe that most of the Palestinians want the agreement and will have no other choice but to suppress those groups that did what they did last Thursday.

[Talmor] Can we stop the agreement?

[Or] Of course we can.

[Talmor] It would be a very dramatic move.

[Or] Yes, but I do not want to stop the agreement because I believe in it. The main reason I chose a political career is that I believe that the main threat to Israel's political and security future is not Syria or Iran; it is having 2.5 million Palestinians living under the same roof with us in Greater Israel. The required separation is a very difficult process, We are encountering and will encounter numerous disappointments. I agree. We are upset, and even more than that, we have suffered casualties. Yet, I still believe that the light at the end of the tunnel is constantly growing brighter.

Soon there will be elections in Judaea and Samaria, and I believe that after they are held, the Palestinian entity will be stronger. I will repeat, however, this key question: What would happen if terror were to intensify, and Janin, Jericho, Ramallah, and Qalqilyah turn into safe havens? Well, the agreement would stop. Then, I would have no choice but to return to Qalqilyah and Janin! They know this too. Yasir 'Arafat knows this, and I believe that most of the Palestinians understand that it is not worth their while to return to where we were before, and are willing to try a new thing. Some people do not want this, and they carried out the operation on 29 November. Regrettably, although we are currently speaking about Arabs, there are Jews who do not want the agreement as well, and they too conduct operations against it.

[Talmor] At the same time, Israelis living along the Green Line near Janin — and not only they — are worried.

[Or] I have my own ideas regarding the dividing line, but I would not like to discuss them in public. Next week I will have my first tour of that region, and I will closely study the problems there. I have my own concepts, but I would not like to discuss them at this time.

[Talmor] Do they not coincide with Minister Shahal's concepts?

[Or] They are different from Shahal's ideas and are closer to the defense minister's views, and I am happy to say that I pointed it out a long time ago. I believe that, in the long run, a fence and obstacles are no solution. The only way to win this war is to make both sides lose their appetite to fight. I wish to construct a form of coexistence, but I would want to first examine this in the field and see where it works and where it does not. Next week, therefore, I will tour the area and be much the wiser.

[Talmor] Deputy Defense Minister Ori Or, thank you.

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[Or] Thank you.

IDF on Alert; Attacks, Advance of Forces Denied

TA0412093995 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 4 Dec 95 p A1

[Report by 'Aqiva Eldar, Aluf Ben, and Eytan Rabin]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers in the security zone in Lebanon have been placed on high alert in light of expected katyusha attacks. The residents of the northern settlements, however, were not ordered to spend last night in shelters or safe rooms.

Israeli military sources claimed last night that the IDF did not fire into Lebanese villages or demolish houses. The IDF spokesman yesterday denied reports from Lebanon that said an armored force crossed and operated north of the security zone boundary.

Transfer of Powers to PA Continues

TA0412082095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 4 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Judaea and Samaria Civil Administration has transferred to the Palestinians the planning, housing, and absentee property powers in Tulkarm and Qalqilyah in preparation for the redeployment.

Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the transfer of the magistrate's court in Nabulus has begun. The banking authority in Judaea and Samaria will be transferred to the Palestinian Authority [PA] in 10 days.

IDF 'Satisfied' With PA Security Performance

TA0312123795 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 3 Dec 95 pp A1, A12

[Report by Eytan Rabin]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Palestinian Authority [PA] has been doing everything possible to prevent terrorist infiltrations from the autonomous areas into Israel. In most cases, the PA was successful in preventing terrorist attacks. These facts emerge from IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Intelligence Branch reports to government elements.

According to the reports, the IDF is generally satisfied with the performance of the PA and its security apparatuses. Intelligence Branch experts believe that PA personnel acted swiftly and efficiently in the series of incidents in the Janin District last week.

In the incident on the night of 30 November, when a Border Police officer and a soldier were kidnapped, the PA acted quickly and capably, securing their almost immediate release. The Intelligence officers report indicates that as soon as the PA learned of the abduction and detention of the two Border Police members, all the Palestinian security elements went into high gear under instructions from 'Arafat, who personally ordered that the safety of the kidnapped men be ensured.

The report further indicates that as soon as the Palestinians were informed of the kidnapping, they did everything to locate the Black Panther kidnappers, succeeded in finding them, and subsequently put them on trial. The IDF Intelligence report on an incident in the Janin District village of al-Yamun a day earlier was equally appreciative of the PA. In that incident, in which Palestinian policemen detained two Israelis, a father and son, without any authority to do so, the PA ordered the two men released at once.

According to the Intelligence Branch report, the Palestinians are trying to prove real control of the field, although in some of the events they were not present in areas where they are responsible for security. The Intelligence Branch officers report stresses the Palestinians' eagerness to prove that they are doing everything to adhere to the letter of the agreement.

There is cooperation between the IDF and the PA in the capture of fugitives. Last week, Israeli security forces apprehended 16 Islamic Jihad members in the Janin area. The act had the support of the Palestinians, who did not condemn it despite complaints from the Palestinian street. [passage omitted]

Palestinians Said 'Very Pleased' With Redeployment

TA3011135695 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 30 Nov 95 p A5

[Report by Eytan Rabin and Ori Nir]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] According to security evaluations conducted by the IDF [Israel Defense Forces], the Palestinians are very pleased with the IDF's redeployment in the West Bank towns, especially in Janin. The Palestinians informed IDF officers that they were very pleased with the redeployment timetable and with the fact that the IDF has in effect been fulfilling all the agreements.

Moreover, the Palestinians are pleased with the deployment in Qalqilyah, Tulkarm, and Nabulus. In meetings held by Palestinian and Israeli officers, it was decided that Janin would be the permanent showcase for the IDF's redeployment in the West Bank.

Military sources in the Central Command said the evacuation from the West Bank towns would occur a

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few days ahead of schedule. At the same time, senior sources denied reports that the IDF would redeploy in Hebron in December 1995 rather than in March 1996. According to a senior military source, the redeployment timetable for Hebron has not changed. The senior source added that there were reports about Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad plans to stage terror attacks during the IDF redeployment, and that that is why troops in the West Bank have been reinforced.

The IDF and the Palestinian Police yesterday agreed to open a coordination and liaison office in Hebron District in another 10 days, but its missions will be decided only when the redeployment in Hebron is completed next March.

The agreed timetable for Hebron provides for the opening of a coordination office on 10 December, completing the IDF redeployment outside population centers in the rural areas (Area B) surrounding Hebron on 26 December, and completing the redeployment in Hebron itself (Area A) on 26 March. This was confirmed yesterday by Colonel Rubhi 'Arafat, head of the Palestinian team for military coordination and liaison with Israel in the West Bank. [passage omitted]

'Technical Reasons' Delay Qalqilyah Redeployment

TA0312060195 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Israeli security sources say that for technical reasons, 24 Palestinian officers scheduled to arrive in Qalqilyah today will arrive tomorrow. Earlier, Palestinians had linked the delay to the kidnapping of the two Border Police guards in Janin.

Another group of police officers is due to arrive in Tulkarm this week as part of the redeployment. A group of officers is scheduled to arrive in Bethlehem today to open the joint District Coordinating Office [DCO] there. Another group of officers is expected to arrive in Nabulus, where the DCO was opened last week.

IDF Kills Arab Youth During Nabulus Riot

TA0112171495 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] An Arab youth was killed and another sustained moderate wounds in a riot in the Nabulus area. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that Arab youngsters stoned an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] patrol near the village of Dayr al-Hatab. The soldiers fired at the rioters.

Poll Shows Arab Sector Supportive of Labor Party

TA0112123295 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 1 Dec 95 p A5

[Report by Yosef Elgazi]

[FBIS Translated Text] An elections poll conducted by Dr. Miryam Yisra'eli of the al-Midan Institute for the Nazareth weekly KUL AL- 'ARAB indicates that were the elections for the 14th Knesset held now, the voting rate among Israeli Arabs would have been very high; that approximately half of them would have voted for Labor; that except for HADASH [Democratic Front for Peace and Equality], no other Arab party would have passed the electability threshold; and that SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] and the National Religious Party [NRP] would not have received any votes at all. The details of the poll are published on KUL AL-'ARAB today.

The poll, which was conducted by phone 10 days after Rabin's murder, included 502 interviewees (male and female; Muslims, Christians, and Druze; from the Galilee, Triangle, the Negev, and mixed cities; on the basis of five age groups and five education levels). The poll included one open question: "If the elections were held today, what party would you vote for?"

The results of the poll show that approximately 48.4 percent of Arab voters would vote for Labor, contrary to some 20.3 percent who voted for Labor in the 1992 elections. Only 9.7 percent would vote for HADASH, contrary to 23.2 percent in 1992. Meretz would receive 5.8 percent as opposed to 9.7 percent in 1992. The Arab Democratic Party — 3.0 percent, (15.2 percent in 1992). The Likud — 1.2 percent (8.4 percent in 1992). Ahmad al-Tibi would receive only 0.2 percent. Other parties — 0.9 percent. Would not vote — 4 percent. Undecided — 16.8 percent. No answer — 10 percent.

Yisra'eli's figures indicate that Labor would double its strength from 1992, while the Likud would fall from 8.4 to 1.2 percent. The Likud received only 4.2 percent of the Druze vote. None of the interviewees mentioned the Progressive List for Peace — which received 9.2 percent in 1992; SHAS, which got 4.9 percent; and the NRP, which got 4.8 percent in 1992.

Musa Hasday, the owner of an advertising company, an expert on elections trends in the Arab sector, and one of the owners of KUL AL-'ARAB, yesterday assessed that the voting percentage among the Arab sector will be over 80 percent. The number of eligible Arab voters in the 1996 elections will be approximately 400,000, constituting some 12 percent of the Israeli voters. The potential power of the Arab voters reaches approximately 14-15 Knesset seats. Hasday believes the

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poll indicates that the Arab voters want to directly vote for the party leading the peace process — Labor, especially after Rabin's murder. It also points to a crisis in the local Arab leadership. Hasday warned against a situation wherein the Arab vote will be split up into small lists which have no chance of passing the electability threshold, thus losing the impact of many votes in the constitution of the next Knesset.

Settlers Plan Armed Patrols; IDF Bans Move

TA0212141195 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Our correspondent has learned that on 4 December, the Samaria Regional Council will start operating armed settler patrols on Samaria roads. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has announced it will prevent this. Our settlers affairs correspondent Gil Litman obtained a brochure issued by the Samaria Regional Council which details the operational methods and goals of the armed patrols. The patrols will be held in bullet-proof vehicles, and the settlers will take part in them via a permanent duty roster. Council head Arye 'Ofri, who will be on the first patrol, said that the plan was presented to the regional military commanders and that they have expressed their approval of it.

The IDF spokesman at the Central Command, however, made it clear that the army absolutely bans such patrols, and stressed that the security forces will prevent them from taking place. He noted that the local council heads had been made aware of this policy on several occasions in the past.

Peres Meets Rabbi on Settlement Issues

TA0412124795 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 4 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres met this morning with Rabbi Shlomo Riskin from the settlement of Efrat in an attempt to enhance the dialogue between the government and the settlers. After the meeting, Riskin said that Peres had promised to examine the possibility of continued construction in Efrat as well as the possibility of keeping the settlements under Israeli sovereignty in the framework of the permanent arrangement. Our correspondent Uri Gordon reports on the meeting:

[Begin recording] [Gordon] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres today deviated from his predecessor's line by making explicit promises to the settler community.

Last summer, when the late Yitzhaq Rabin met with representatives of the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip, while the settlers waged stormy demonstrations and squatted on hilltops, the dialogue never went beyond a simple exchange of views. At today's meeting, however, which was initiated by Rabbi Shlomo Riskin from Efrat, far more concrete statements were heard.

[Riskin] Peres told me that no settlements would be removed. He also wants to do everything possible so that the settlers will remain part of the State of Israel at the end of the process.

[Gordon] Riskin explained that the promise applied to the interim arrangement and that Peres had said he would try to prevent the removal of settlements even in the framework of the permanent arrangement. Peres also said he would examine the possibility of continuing construction in Efrat. As recalled, there is an ongoing dispute over two of the hills near the settlement, Hatamar Hill and Hadagan Hill. The prime minister also promised that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] would not withdraw from the Bethlehem area before the completion of the bypass road planned for the use of 'Etzyon Bloc residents.

As for the settlers, Rabbi Shlomo Riskin spoke about a significant reduction in protest activities.

[Riskin] If we see that the government is making efforts to mend the rifts and guarantee us a secure future, there will be no need for struggle.

[Gordon] The dialogue between the government and the settlers, deemed important by both sides in itself, may now, in the wake of this morning's meeting, possibly lead to facts on the ground.

Peres on New Government, Peace Talks

TA0112133095 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV (SHABAT supplement) in Hebrew 1 Dec 95 pp 2, 3, 4, 5

[Interview with Prime Minister Shim'on Peres by Sima Qadmon and Hemi Shalev on 28 November; place not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [MA'ARIV] You declared on several occasions that your new government will be an extension of the Rabin government, but differences are already discernible in several areas.

[Peres] I never used the word extension.

[MA'ARIV] Well, a government that will follow in its footsteps.

[Peres] What I said was that I would fulfill whatever Rabin pledged, but you cannot do that when the circumstances change. A robot cannot be a prime minister, and I am not a robot. What I am saying is that I will honor what Yitzhaq pledged to do, and I will

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act as if he were alive even with regard to issues on which we disagreed.

[MA'ARIV] What does that mean?

[Peres] For example, I supported the evacuation of Netzarim, and he opposed it. He was murdered; his opinions were not.

[MA'ARIV] Do you mean that you will have an argument with yourself over this issue?

[Peres] I will do what Yitzhaq would have done. The fact that he was murdered does not mean that I will impose my views, and this also applies to the referendum. I have not canceled any of his appointments. At the same time, I am free, and I must think about the future.

[MA'ARIV] Mr. Peres, let us talk about the Syrian issue. The impression is that you are embarking on this issue with the utmost intensity.

[Peres] Without going into details, I do not think that the public is really aware of what exactly has been done on this issue.

[MA'ARIV] You mean that the public does not know?

[Peres] That is correct. Of course, I will examine every existing possibility. That is my duty. My view of my role as Rabin's replacement is that I must not only hold the reigns of government but also the reigns of peace. I cannot do only the things I find comfortable. I must continue to tackle the issues at hand. There has been a great change. Rabin's assassination caused a major shock, and I do not agree that this is just a passing phase. [passage omitted]

[MA'ARIV] Were you aware of everything that was being done on the Syrian track?

[Peres] Please answer me: Why I should tell you?

[MA'ARIV] You said yourself that you found plans in Rabin's desk about which you knew nothing.

[Peres] What I said is enough. I do not want to go into that. There is no way I am going to go into that.

[MA'ARIV] Did you know in advance about Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq's entreaty to the Syrian foreign minister in Barcelona?

[Peres] Yes, Baraq showed me the speech beforehand, and I approved it. He also phoned me at 0200 to tell me what happened.

[MA'ARIV] Still on the Syrian issue, Mr. Peres: Have you changed your assessment of the chances of attaining a breakthrough with Syria in the next few months in comparison with what it was two months ago?

[Peres] No. I formulated my position a long time ago, and I informed Yitzhaq about it. He did not rule it out, although his emphases were different. That is how we worked. I see no reason to change my position, just as I see no need to cancel any commitment given by Yitzhaq.

[MA'ARIV] Were you pleased with the ambassadors track?

[Peres] It was dictated by the Syrians. Just like in the case of the press and television, I believe that you cannot make do with a single newspaper or channel and that you need at least two. We need several channels of dialogue, not just one. [passage omitted]

[MA'ARIV] Mr. Peres, is it hard for you to do the job of prime minister and defense minister after years of being involved in a totally different area?

[Peres] I do not want to boast, but I have been both defense minister and prime minister before. I am no novice in the area.

[MA'ARIV] But being defense minister requires a big change in your declarations.

[Peres] Such as?

[MA'ARIV] For example, take your harsh statement earlier this week about the Palestinian Covenant.

[Peres] I had said it before. I insisted that the Palestinian undertaking concerning the covenant be included in the agreement rather than be an attendant letter as it was before. Today, it is a chapter in the agreement.

[MA'ARIV] But as defense minister you are in a situation that differs from the one you were in before. You are supposed to represent security considerations, whereas before you complained about the military exaggerating its security demands.

[Peres] Some people, including some in the army, had very serious doubts about Oslo. They had many apprehensions about the issue of Gaza, and these were later disproved.

[MA'ARIV] It is not just Gaza. You also differed with General Ilan Biran on the question of Judaea and Samaria.

[Peres] (smiling as if he knows something we don't) I learned to work with him, and he learned to work with me. Everything is fine.

[MA'ARIV] The question is: Who will now espouse the hard-line security position that is pursued before reaching a compromise?

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[Peres] I am not sure that is how it works. It is more a question of exchanging views than of getting entrenched in them. Military positions guided me in my talks with 'Arafat in the past, too. There is hardly a case in which the army demanded something and I ignored it or failed to raise it in the negotiations, or it did not ultimately become part of the agreement. I am very meticulous. There is usually a division of labor between the political and military levels. The political level must take the military level into consideration on military issues but not on political ones. When a professional military view is voiced, however, it would be wrong on the part of the political level to disregard and ignore it.

[MA'ARIV] So what is your reaction to the foreign minister's statement two days ago that from the purely military point of view, Israel should stay on the Golan Heights even in peacetime?

[Peres] I say that there is no pure military consideration. Military considerations are prominent, but there are other considerations, such as political, financial, and economic ones.

[MA'ARIV] To what extent will you take Baraq's opinion on security matters into consideration?

[Peres] As much as I can. I do not intend to scorn any opinion or people who have an opinion. My convictions are strong enough for me to able to listen to the opinions of others. [passage omitted]

[MA'ARIV] Ori Or said today that we must start to hold the Lebanese Government accountable rather than always point an accusing finger at Syria. Did he say that with your concurrence?

[Peres] I do not think he needs my concurrence. He is the chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

[MA'ARIV] He is also the deputy defense minister, your deputy.

[Peres] He is both.

[MA'ARIV] Does it seem right to you to move toward peace at a time when Syria is not taking direct action to deal with Hizballah's attacks? Perhaps we should demand a halt to such activities before we enter negotiations?

[Peres] Any conditions for negotiating with terrorists gives an enormous advantage to the terrorists. The Syrians distinguish between freedom fighting and terror. We do not accept this distinction, which is a very convenient one for the Syrians.

I take a very serious view of the katyusha attacks. It is clear to me that we cannot dismiss them. We will draw the necessary lessons from the situation that has been created. We asked the United States to approach the Syrians, and it did.

[MA'ARIV] Perhaps we could propose to Lebanon, with the consent of the Syrians, some security arrangement that does not involve the signing of a full peace agreement?

[Peres] Such an agreement would only extract a price from Israel without getting anything in return.

[MA'ARIV] Mr. Peres, people have been wondering whether the setup you created with Uri Savir as the director general of the Foreign Ministry who also works directly with you on the peace process will really survive. Isn't it an anomaly?

[Peres] Why? We need a joint team made up of people from the IDF [Israel Defense Forces], the Prime Minister's Office, and the Foreign Ministry. Such a team should be headed either by a military man or a civilian. It was agreed with Yitzhaq that it should be a civilian, and that man was Uri Savir. What has changed? If necessary, we will set up a similar team vis-a-vis the Syrians.

[MA'ARIV] Does this mean that the role of Ambassador Itamar Rabinovich will be reduced?

[Peres] Itamar Rabinovich's role was to negotiate with the Syrian ambassador, and it remains unchanged.

[MA'ARIV] But Rabinovich was also the chief adviser, and he was in charge of a considerable part of the negotiations.

[Peres] (Peres has always been good at concealing his feelings) I do not think there was such a formal description. He will remain the chief adviser now as well. There is no need to hurt anybody.

[MA'ARIV] Your relations with Hayim Ramon cooled after you ran against Rabin. How do you overcome this and become political partners and allies?

[Peres] It depends on the vocabulary one uses. I said that I would willingly accept Hayim Ramon's return to the party and the government even before I assumed my current job. This was and remains my position. A government does not work on the basis of punishment or love. I appreciate Hayim Ramon, and I think he will make an important contribution to the government. As for the past, I leave that to the historians. Moreover, my philosophy is that life is short and it is a shame to waste it on the past.

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Peres-Shohat-Baraq Team To Replace Inner Cabinet

TA0212141795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres has decided not to form an inner cabinet, the ministerial committee on national security affairs, within his cabinet. Instead, he will form a small-scale ministerial team, in accordance with the law, which will approve special political-security decisions. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz has learned that Mr. Peres decided not to form the inner cabinet because he found it hard not to appoint ministers who were members of Rabin's cabinet and replace them with ministers he wants.

Therefore, Peres will employ a team that will include himself in his capacity as prime minister and defense minister, the foreign minister, and the finance minister. This team will work according to Basic Law: the Government, which stipulates that this team will approve special political-security decisions.

Peres To Form Inner Cabinet After Leaks Solved

TA0312113595 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres today announced he will reconstitute the inner cabinet in future. First, however, he plans to consult with Justice Minister Liba'i in order to examine ways of fighting the plague of leaks. Mr. Peres said he distinguishes between leaks that are merely annoying and those that endanger human lives. He made it clear that the leaks from the ministers' consultation on 29 December were of the latter kind. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that among the possibilities being considered for preventing leaks are a proposal to bind the ministers by a written commitment to maintain secrecy and a proposal to expand the use of military censorship.

This morning, the cabinet decided to establish 13 different ministerial committees, including a committee for dealing with the conversion issue. This committee will include Ministers Liba'i, Shahal, Ramon, Shetrit, Rubinstein, Tzaban, 'Amital, and Beilin.

In the session, Internal Security Minister Shahal requested to be relieved of his duties in the Ministerial Committee on the Shin Bet. Shahal did not explain his decision, but several ministers claimed that Shahal's request is meant to protest the difficulties that have arisen in the establishment of the Internal Security Ministry.

The cabinet also approved the draft law dealing with surrogate mothers and the amendment to the military cemeteries law, which will allow the families of fallen soldiers to add personal notes to the gravestones.

A new instrument was introduced into the cabinet room today: a stopwatch signaling to the ministers that they must complete their statements within five minutes.

Baraq Outlines Foreign Policy Goals to Staffers

TA0112164495 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq outlined the ministry's goals to the Foreign Ministry's senior echelon. They are promoting peace, advancing the economy, strengthening ties with East Asia, drawing closer to Europe and the Mediterranean states, and cultivating relations with the United States and with Jewish communities in the diaspora.

It was reported that the department dealing with the diaspora will be enlarged and the responsibilities of the adviser for diaspora affairs will be expanded. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that the meeting was told that Israel currently has official ties with 155 states and that only 30 states do not have relations with it.

Beilin, Sarid Hold 'Secret' Meeting on Differences

TA0212160895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz has learned that Ministers Yosi Beilin and Yosi Sarid held a secret meeting on 29 November in an attempt to settle the differences between Labor and Meretz. They dealt with, among other things, Labor's contacts with the religious parties. After the meeting, Sarid told our correspondent that Meretz will not yield to the National Religious Party on any political or religious issue.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0805 GMT on 2 December carries a related report by Shlomo Raz citing Sarid as saying that "if any other party is given veto rights on political issues" and if concessions are made on religious issues, "Meretz will immediately quit the coalition."]

Court Extends 'Amir Brothers' Remand

TA0312090895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The president of the Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court has extended the remand in custody of the brothers Yig'al and Hagay 'Amir — Yitzhaq Rabin's assassin and his accomplice — by another four days. The judge decided to remand the two in custody

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after being presented by the police representative with secret information on the basis of which the police are exploring a new direction in the investigation. The judge recommended that the police complete the investigation during this time and file a charge sheet.

The accused assassin used the opportunity to make abusive comments, as he has done on previous occasions. Our correspondent 'Anat Peleg reports that Yig'al 'Amir's relatives came to court today as well.

Assassination Suspect Released, Under House Arrest

TA0112194695 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 1 Dec 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Margalit Har-Shefi has been released from jail and put under house arrest in Bet El after being held for 20 days on suspicion of involvement in Prime Minister Rabin's assassination. The police are recommending to the State Prosecutor's Office that Har-Shefi be tried on charges of failing to prevent the prime minister's assassination and belonging to an illegal organization. She was given a hero's welcome in Bet El. [passage omitted]

Right-Wing Activists Charged With Sedition

TA0312113095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The State Attorney's Office filed charges today against three Zo Artzenu leaders, who were charged on eight counts, including sedition. The three, Moshe Feiglin, Rabbi Beni Elon, and Shmu'el Sackett, were also charged with solicitation to take possession of real estate by coercion, solicitation to illegal assembly, and with attempted solicitation by means of blackmail and threats.

[Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English on 3 December carries a related report on pages 1 and 2, adding that the charge of sedition in such cases is "unprecedented" and that "until now, the law against sedition was only invoked in incidents related to the Israeli-Arab conflict."]

Our correspondent Aviv Bushinsky reports that the State Attorney's Office decided to include these clauses in the charge sheet because of the actions of the three, which included conspiring to foil government decisions and appealing to the public to carry out illegal acts such as blocking roads and commandeering outposts in Judaea and Samaria.

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King Husayn Speaks at Parliament Inauguration

JN0212120095 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1012 GMT 2 Dec 95

[Speech by King Husayn at the inauguration of the third session of the 12th Parliament in Amman—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate, and may God's peace and blessing be upon the Arab Hashemite prophet and his companions.

Honorable Senators, Honorable Deputies: May God's peace and blessing be upon you. In the name of God, and with His blessings, I declare open the third session of the 12th Parliament. It is a source of great satisfaction that this distinguished assembly convenes at a time when Jordan is continuing its confident march toward peace and development.

From this cherished Arab bastion, as our forefathers intended, emanated the contemporary Arab renaissance movement. This country has remained faithful to the principles and noble objectives of the Great Arab Revolt aimed at liberation, unity and a better life for the people of our Arab homeland. The struggle of the Jordanians, under their Hashemite leadership, has been a model of relentless and sincere hard work that had no motive except pleasing God, preserving the interests of our homeland, and defending the Arab nation's causes. To this end, Jordan has truly become a haven for the nation's free and honorable men, past and present, who seek refuge within its borders whenever they encounter hardship or whenever they are denied their basic right to a free, secure and dignified life. From this premise, Jordan has embraced everyone, be they the supporters [Jordanians] or the immigrants [Palestinians], as one cohesive loving family in a deep-rooted national unity that has stood fast in the face of all storms and difficulties. Jordan, as its nation has always expected it to be, will continue to reject country and regional isolationism. It will always be proud of its national identity and of belonging to the Arab homeland, and will continue to be an impregnable barrier in the face of all attempts at penetration and extremism with all the strength that God has given it in order to put an end to any deviation from this righteous path. Our motto will always be: We are all Jordanians, and we are all for Jordan and for the Arab nation. [applause]

Honorable Senators, Honorable Deputies: Jordan's stands have always been supportive of its nation and will continue to be so, for we were partners in the struggle for liberation from colonialism and subservience. Jordan has always been the first to do its pan-Arab duty, at all times, in defense of the honor of the nation and its fateful issues, even at the expense of its own interests, as we bore responsibilities that far exceeded its resources and capabilities to achieve that end.

When military action was the only available option to liberate the land and regain rights, Jordan was at the forefront of those pioneering fighters who paid dearly with their lives and at the expense of the sustenance of its people. Jordan's brave armed forces fought heroically on every field, something which cannot be denied except by those who are spiteful or obstinate. These acts of heroism will be an eternal memory in the hearts and minds of all, and will always be a source of pride and inspiration for future generations.

Jordanians also played an active role in contributing to Arab development in general and to the building of a number of Arab countries, which still remember Jordan's efforts in this regard with much appreciation and gratitude. Jordanians are still a source of support for their brethren in the Arab nation at large, as they never hesitate in coming forward to assist, be it in a certain predicament, or a battle, or a building endeavor. And when negotiation presented itself as a means to regain those usurped rights, Jordan stood by its brethren, calling for a just, comprehensive, and durable peace, which would restore those rights to their rightful owners, in particular the right of the Palestinian people to freely determine their future, and to establish their independent state on their national soil.

We provided to our Palestinian brethren the umbrella, which subsequently led to their being accepted as a central and independent negotiating side. Our brethren then chose to achieve their rights through direct negotiations. They reached an agreement with the Israeli side, the various aspects of which continue to seriously unfold today. The vision of an independent Palestinian entity draws nearer — an entity which we hope will assume its expected role on the Arab scene. We will remain to be a source of support for, and assistance to our Palestinian brethren until they attain their rights in full.

Subsequently, Jordan started negotiating over its own rights in its land and water. These efforts were crowned with the conclusion of a peace treaty, ratified by your distinguished assembly through an honorable and democratic process. This treaty has restored to us our full and complete rights in terms of our land and water. We are now, ladies and gentlemen, beyond the stage of peace-making. It has now become our right, even our duty, to enter the phase of peace- building so that our people can enjoy the fruits of their protracted struggle and painstaking efforts, and assume their role in the Arab and international arena in safety and comfort. As the battle for peace has its requirements, my government

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will shoulder its responsibilities at this stage with the seriousness and confidence required for us to make the optimal use of the comprehensive development which our region will witness.

As we strive to implement the peace treaty with Israel, we cannot accept the bypassing of our leading role in establishing clear inter-Arab relations, and in uniting Arab ranks in the face of the challenges of a period characterized by giant groupings. For this reason, my government has worked and will continue to work toward transcending the estrangement and alienation that befell our relations with some sister countries, and to restore cohesion to joint Arab action, away from preconceived positions which have been superseded by regional and international developments and events.

We will continue to work toward lifting the embargo imposed on the people of Iraq, who have never thought twice about fulfilling their duty toward their nation, in whose defense [applause] they made many a great sacrifice. We firmly believe that it is their right to enjoy a free and dignified life within the framework of freedom, democracy, justice, and respect for human rights.

Honorable Senators, Honorable Deputies: We are fully determined to place Jordan on the economic map of the world, taking advantage of its strategic location, and of the elements of security and stability on its soil, as well as its process of development in an atmosphere of democracy and moderation. The Amman Economic Summit was the crowning achievement of our efforts in this regard, and came as a natural result of the era of peace. Through the coordinated efforts of those dedicated Jordanians from all walks of life, from the public as well as the private sectors, all working in the spirit of one team, Jordan was able to highlight its civilized accomplishments in terms of preparation, organization, and presentation of feasible projects.

The summit was an overwhelming success by all accounts, and it is our sincere hope that our people will feel the fruits of these efforts, and the results of this endeavor in the few years ahead. This can be achieved through providing more basic services, attracting numerous investments, creating new job opportunities, and developing the national economy in a way that would guarantee the enhancement of our beloved country's potential and provide the basic needs of citizens and realize their hopes for a better future.

My government has already begun serious work aimed at strengthening the structure of our national economy through a model formula of partnership with the European Union, as well as through joining the World Trade Organization. This year has witnessed a rise in economic recovery indicators, in no small part due to the important role played by your distinguished assembly in passing a package of economic legislation that creates the appropriate environment for domestic, Arab, and international investment.

Capital expenditure by the government has increased by approximately 20 percent. National exports increased by 26 percent. The gross domestic product increased by a margin of 6 percent. The satisfactory level of financial and monetary stability achieved by the country enabled the exchange rate of the Jordanian dinar to maintain its current level. Our national debt has been reduced through debt forgiveness, debt purchase, or debt rescheduling. We will continue to work, along with friendly and sisterly countries and international organizations, in order to further reduce the burden of our national debt.

My government will continue to implement measures to curtail bureaucracy through simplicity and transparency in order to activate the pioneering role of the private sector in the process of economic development. The infrastructural services now spread across the entire country, and my government is working toward further expanding these services, while ensuring fair distribution, and paying special attention to remote areas as well as promising regions that will hopefully become solid pillars of our national economy. My government is also working on institutionalizing public administration and simplifying its procedures in a manner that people can relate to, enabling them to conduct their business easily, efficiently and fairly.

Honorable Senators, Honorable Deputies: The educational process is the basis of development and the foundation for scientific and technological advancement. In this regard, my government is still in the process of implementing the educational reform program, which would prepare future generations to face the developmental needs and requirements of the 21st century. This can only be done through enhancing knowledge and further developing educational methods, as well as instilling the basic concepts of participation, cooperation and democracy.

My government will pay special attention to the youth of Jordan, by creating a national youth forum through which they can explore their potentials in the service of their country and nation. This will be coupled by an information system characterized by responsible awareness and rational, open-minded advice. Since we realize that the information sector and the press reflect the image of the country before our citizens and the world at large, we will work toward enhancing their roles in the framework of responsible freedom,

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and away from demagoguery, denial of achievements, character assassination, and defamation or penetration [al-ikhtiraq].

Our pulpits shall remain committed to our faith and to the constants of our nation, preaching in the name of God and to His righteous way through wisdom and good counsel, devoid of fanaticism or closed-mindedness, and certainly away from the use of religion as a means to achieve personal, partisan, or vested interests. The cultural movement will remain the focus of our attention so that we can enhance freedom of expression and support writers and innovators, as well as establishing more cultural centers.

My government is ever concerned with providing comprehensive security to the country and its citizens, where people can feel confident that they, their property and honor are safeguarded. This should stretch to cover social security through providing job opportunities and care for needy families; encouraging social assistance programs and charitable work in a country that is abundant with goodwill; and guaranteeing social harmony and solidarity and widening the network of medical insurance. It should also stretch to encompass food security through developing agricultural programs, supporting productive farmers, and regulating agricultural production, marketing, and processing. These steps are meant to secure sufficient food reserve and ensure that subsidy reaches those who deserve it in an appropriate manner.

Honorable Senators, Honorable Deputies: Our democratic process has now taken deep roots and has become a distinguished model commended by our friends and envied by those who wish us ill. We will continue to sponsor this process until it comes to full fruition for the betterment of our people, in an atmosphere of freedom and pluralism of thought, opinion, and affiliation, and in the framework of belonging to this homeland and commitment to its higher interests. Democracy does not mean anarchy or violating the homeland's order and constants, nor does it mean harming national unity, denigrating every accomplishment, and smearing the good reputation of our country and its people. We will continue to monitor these phenomena, which fight democracy in the name of democracy. We shall confront them in an appropriate manner according to the Constitution and the law, for we are all responsible for putting an end to these phenomena, which are alien to our society and our nation's values. [applause]

We clearly realize that stability is the sound basis for achieving progress and development. The absence of stability induces apprehension, confusion, and heading toward the unknown. We also realize that this phase, which is important and promising, God willing, requires new concepts and standards based on competence, diligence, and discipline. It also requires belief in this country and giving it its fair share of loyalty, gratitude, and belonging. [applause] All these matters totally contradict what we see in terms of the attempts at chipping away and destruction, on the one hand, and attempts at self-flagellation, on the other.

Honorable Senators, Honorable Deputies: Our impartial judiciary will be given every care and attention. My government will continue to provide it with every means of support and to preserve its independence so that it would remain the guarantor of justice and the protector of people's rights and freedoms.

As for our valiant Armed Forces, they have always been and continue to be the impregnable shield that protects our homeland, supported in earnest by our security bodies, which remain the watchful eye over the security of the homeland and citizen.

As we pay tribute to our valiant Armed Forces — the Arab Army — in terms of their discipline and loyalty to the honor of soldiership and its principles, we recognize and appreciate their heroism and sacrifices they made in all the battles they have waged with honor and manliness in defense of our nation and rights. We also recognize, with exceptional pride, these Armed Forces' exemplary performance — which embodied the bright and noble image of our country — through their participation in international peace-keeping forces in a number of countries around the world. [applause]

We are also proud of our security bodies, which have always been a true example of discipline and dedication in protecting national security within a framework of noble principles, piety, and high values. Proceeding from all this, my government will extend every support to our valiant Armed Forces and security bodies by providing them with sophisticated weaponry and means, which will enable them to carry out their noble duties efficiently and with distinction.

My lord, make this a city of peace, and feed its people with fruits. [Koranic verse]

May God's peace and blessings be upon you.

Paper Cites Prince's Statement on Iraq Opposition

JN0412104595 Amman AL-MAJD in Arabic 4 Dec 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Crown Prince Hasan has said that the talks between the three main Iraqi opposition groups; the Kurds, Sunnis, and Shiites, have been regularly held in several capitals. He said these meetings

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could also be held in Amman, which previously hosted controversial meetings.

The crown prince refused to give a date for convening such a meeting, and said it was unlikely that Jordan would mediate between the Iraqi opposition parties, but said Amman could provide facilities for the opposition to settle their internal differences.

The prince's statements to London Radio have come following reports that King Husayn met with Iraqi opposition members in London this week. The reports said King Husayn plans to convene a conference for the opposition in Jordan in line with his recent call for federation in Iraq between the Kurds, Sunnis, and Shiites.

The Jordanian monarch adopted this position after the defection to Jordan of two ranking aides to President Saddam Husayn last August.

The convening of an opposition conference, however, would increase tension in relations between Amman and Baghdad, and could anger Syria and Egypt, which are becoming increasingly uncomfortable with the declared Jordanian strategy toward Iraq.

London Radio said that there are no signs at present that the divided Iraqi opposition factions are prepared to iron out their differences and unify their ranks.

Measures Reduce Number of Foreign Workers by 70,000

JN0312091595 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 3 Dec 95 p 3

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Stringent measures imposed by the Ministry of Labour have led to the reduction of 70,000 the number of foreign workers in Jordan by the end of last month, according to official figures and statements.

The ministry is also continuing close scrutiny of work permits being issued to non-Jordanians with a view to further reducing the strength of the foreign work force in the country, official statements said.

The minister of labour, Nadir Abu-al-Sha'r, said last week that 70,000 of the estimated 250,000 foreign workers in Jordan had left the Kingdom by the time an Oct. 26 deadline set for all guest workers in the country to regularise their status.

Slightly more than 100,000 foreign workers managed to set right their status in the country before the deadline expired.

The deadline was set in line with a decision adopted by the Council of Ministers in August. The decision also banned the employment of non-Jordanians in 15 professions, but left the door open for foreigners to work in areas like agriculture and construction as well as domestic work.

According to Dr. Abu-al-Sha'r, the measures adopted by the government have resulted in opening 30,000 to 40,000 job opportunities for Jordanians.

Officials said Ministry of Labour inspectors were continuing to pay surprise visits to check violations of the labour regulations and, in most cases, foreign workers found working without work permit or engaged in professions other than specified in the work permit were being asked to leave the country in concert with their concerned diplomatic representatives in the Kingdom.

In addition, establishments which are found to be employing foreigners in violation of the regulations also face heavy fines as deterrent, according to the officials.

Most of the so-called illegal workers in Jordan were Egyptian nationals, followed by Syrians. A few hundred Asians, mostly Pakistanis, Indians, Sri Lankans and Filipinos were also found to be working in violation of the rules and were asked to regularise their status under the rules or leave the country.

The bulk of them were found to be in possession of work permits in the agricultural sector, which are relatively easy to obtain, but were engaged in other professions, according to diplomatic sources.

Citizens of most Arab countries do not need a prior visa to entering Jordan and this provision, which is in line with agreements between the countries concerned, is seen to lead to nationals from some Arab countries, notably Egypt and Syria, to remain in the country and take up jobs without securing Ministry of Labour permission.

Officials statistics indicate unemployment in Jordan at around 18 per cent, but there are different interpretations to the figure and the features of unemployment in Jordan.

Some experts argue that many Jordanians take up two jobs, and thus deny employment opportunities to the unemployed. On the other hand, those who hold two jobs argue that they would face hardships without moonlighting.

Another aspect that characterises the situation in Jordan is that many Jordanians are not willing to take up menial, low-paid jobs in the agricultural and construction sectors.

Many also refuse to work in the domestic services sector.

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The main argument put up by those who refuse to accept such jobs is that the income is simply not enough and that foreign workers are willing to accept low salaries because they are also ready to accept "sub-standard" conditions like living 10 or 12 to a low-rent room.

Two Military Accords Signed With France

JN0212204095 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency al-Sharif Zayd Bin Shakir, prime minister and defense minister, received French Defense Minister Charles Millon at his office in the Prime Ministry this evening. Two agreements on military cooperation and bilateral relations in the defense, training, and technical cooperation areas were signed. More details in the following report:

The meeting discussed ways of bolstering and developing spheres of military cooperation between the two friendly countries as well as a number of issues of mutual interest. The French minister conveyed the greetings of French President Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Alain Juppe to the Jordanian Government and expressed his country's appreciation for the participation of the Jordanian forces in peace-keeping missions.

Talks dealt with bolstering and strengthening the peace process in order to include the other tracks, in addition to the modernization of the Jordanian air force. The French minister hailed the Jordanian role in the peace process. The two sides emphasized the importance of just, lasting, and comprehensive peace in the Middle East and consultation on issues of joint concern, and strengthening relations between the two friendly countries based on mutual respect and respect for the sovereignty of each side.

They also emphasized their desire to maintain democracy and human rights, and to develop bilateral relations in the military and security sectors. The two sides also discussed the agreement signed in the United States recently on solving the conflict in Bosnia. The prime minister expressed hope that this agreement would be implemented to end the suffering of the Bosnian people and to reconstruct their country. The French minister expressed his country's commitment to the Bosnian cause and the French president's personal concern with this subject.

The two sides discussed the situation in Iraq, and emphasized that the suffering of the Iraqi people should be ended.

The prime minister and the French defense minister signed two agreements on military cooperation and bilateral relations in the areas of defense, training, and technical cooperation at the end of the meeting.

In a statement following the meeting, the French minister expressed French President Jacques Chirac's admiration of the great role His Majesty King Husayn played and continues to play in the Middle East peace efforts. He said this region requires stability, security, balance, and peace, and he stressed that these efforts will advance the peace process.

On the subject of supplying Jordan with warplanes, the French minister said this subject was not discussed during his talks with the prime minister, and said the Defense cooperation agreement between France and Jordan calls for consultations, training, and joint maneuvers between the two countries. The French minister said supplying Jordan with military equipment and munitions was discussed. He said a French team will discuss this subject in the coming weeks.

General 'Abd-al-Hafiz Mar'i al-Ka'abinah, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, also met with the French Defense minister at the General Command of the Armed Forces. Discussions dealt with developments in the region in general and aspects of cooperation and coordination and issues of joint concern.

Millon arrived in Amman this evening on an official visit to the kingdom that will last several days.

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Al-Hariri Responds to Israel's 'Threats'

NC0312125195 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has responded to the recent Israeli threats against Lebanon. He said that peace cannot be established in the region through threats.

Referring to remarks by Israeli Deputy Defense Minister Ori Or, the prime minister said today: An Israeli threat has been conveyed to us and to Syria. We are used to this talk. Our country wishes to live in peace and to take part in establishing the region's peace. However, peace cannot be made through threats. Whoever wants peace must withdraw from the land in accordance with the UN resolutions and human rights laws.

Continuing, the prime minister added: Although we are a small country, we continue to abide by our sovereignty, independence, and dignity. He said that Israel's threats only mean that it does not want peace. Prime Minister al-Hariri expressed the hope that peace will prevail in the region and that Lebanon will take part in the establishment of a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace.

Prime Minister al-Hariri's remarks were made during a ceremony held to honor top-ranking and outstanding students of al-Hariri's foundation for the year 1994-95. The ceremony was held in the Assembly Hall at the American University of Beirut today. It was attended by a number of ministers, a huge crowd of educational officials, and students families.

Buwayz Expects New 'Dynamism' in Peace Talks

NC0112180795 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz expects new dynamism in the peace process. He said that new developments are likely. Referring to the deadlock that existed prior to Yitzhaq Rabin's assassination, he said there might be a better chance now to hasten the whole operation.

He said that specifying a date for the resumption of the Syrian-Israeli negotiations at this time would be an exercise in speculation.

Speaking at a news conference he held at the residence of the Lebanese ambassador to France, Buwayz emphasized the importance of inter-Arab solidarity, which is currently flawed.

He blamed the countries which concluded separate peace agreements with Israel, noting that they did not achieve bigger gains because they did so.

Referring to the Lebanese-Syrian treaty of cooperation, Buwayz said it does not contradict any other international agreements that Lebanon has signed.

Minister Buwayz will return to Beirut after two days. Earlier he attended the conference on European-Mediterranean dialogue in Barcelona.

Syria's Talas: No Peace Without Syria, Lebanon

NC0312174895 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Syrian Defense Minister General Mustafa Talas has stated that every time the date of the negotiations approaches, Israel tries to escalate the situation in south Lebanon. He underlined that there will be no genuine peace without Lebanon and Syria. He pointed out that the options for peace are bigger than the options for war. Talas was speaking in Zgharta [in Lebanon], where he offered his condolences on the death of Iris Franjiyah [wife of late President Sulayman Franjiyah].

'Sagger' Rocket Attack on Israeli Patrol Reported

NC0112145295 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1430 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A Sagger rocket was fired at an Israeli army patrol in the al-Rayhan area at noon today; it caused no casualties. A South Lebanese Army [SLA] position in Jazzin came under shell fire today. No casualties were reported. Israeli and SLA troops returned fire.

'Resistance' Declares Attack on 'Hostile' Troops

NC0112175095 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli assaults on southern villages and the hills of Iqlim al-Tuffah and western al-Biqa' continued today. The hills of Mashgharah, Maydun, and 'Ayn-al-Tinah were the targets of bombardment by 155-mm artillery.

The Islamic Resistance announced that it had carried out two operations against the occupation forces and their Agents and repulsed an attempt by Lahd's forces [South Lebanese Army] in western al-Biqa'. It declared that it attacked a hostile troop assembly point in the Taw'amat Niha post with rockets, scoring direct hits.

This afternoon Israeli warplanes flew at low-altitudes over the villages in the Tyre area and the central sector of the border area.

An Israeli gunboat and Israeli artillery from the southern posts fired 155-mm fragmentation shells at the Lebanese

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coast near al-Qulaylah, south of Tyre. This is the same place that an Israeli reconnaissance drone crashed this morning.

Israeli Helicopters Raid Hizballah Positions

NC0212204895 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Two Israeli Cobra helicopters carried out a raid against Jabal Abu Rashid near Mashgharah this evening.

Hizballah announced that the two helicopters attacked some of its positions in southern al-Biqa' at 1900 today. The raid was followed by a three-minute exchange of heavy machine-gun fire between Hizballah and the Israeli forces. There were no casualties.

'Resistance' Sources Deny Israeli Raid

NC0312070195 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Guarded calm continues to reign foremost in the south amid the enemy leaders' threats. A complete calm prevailed along the areas that are adjacent to the occupied strip last night. However, this calm was interrupted by a few mortar shells fired by the enemy artillery in Qal'at Arnun on the outskirts of Yuhmur and al-Shaqif.

Meanwhile, Islamic Resistance sources have denied that enemy helicopters have raided Jabal Abu Rashid in Western al-Biqa' yesterday evening. The sources said that enemy helicopters only flew over the area. [passage omitted]

Amal Statement Claims Killing 8 Israelis in Clashes

NC0312132395 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Amal Movement announced a short while ago that since 1300 its groups have been attacking Israeli positions in al-Burj, al-Dabshah, and 'Ali al-Tahir. A statement by Amal added that its groups had managed to control al-Burj position after killing all the troops manning it.

The statement added that Amal groups had destroyed a tank inside the 'Ali al-Tahir position and another Israeli tank in al-Dabshah. The latter tank was attempting to bombard al-Nabatiyah. The statement added that at approximately 1330 today an Israeli force tried to advance from al-Dabshah to 'Ali al-Tahir. The force was ambushed by Amal groups. As a result, eight Israeli soldiers were killed, the statement added. Following this, the Israeli troops bombarded al-Nabatiyah. The Israeli troops are now shelling Hayy al-Maslakh in al-Nabatiyah, al-Nabatiyah al-Fawqa, and Kafr Tibnit. The resistance's artillery is now returning the fire, while Israeli aircraft are overflying the region. Shells are falling at a rate of four shells per minute.

IDF Denies Tank Column Operating by 'Security Zone'

TA0312174095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] An IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman stated that IDF forces were not operating north of the security zone. The spokesman denied reports from Lebanon that an IDF armored column was operating there.

In south Lebanon, the artillery exchanges subsided this afternoon. The IDF shelled terrorist positions in the eastern sector for several hours. Our correspondent Ilan Ro'e reports that the artillery exchanges started after terrorists fired mortar shells at an SLA [South Lebanese Army] outpost. [passage omitted]

Al-Nabatiyah Bombarded; Amal Updates Israeli Losses

NC0412064895 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 4 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Israel has stepped up its attacks on southern areas. Israeli forces bombarded al-Nabatiyah with over 200 fragmentation and incendiary shells, causing panic in al-Nabatiyah and other areas and inflicting casualties.

The Amal Movement declared that one of its groups gained control of the 'Ali al-Tahir position while other groups attacked the positions of al-Dabshah and al-Burj. The enemy admitted that Resistance fighters are in control of the 'Ali al-Tahir position. The Amal Movement said the attack left well over 30 enemy troops dead or wounded. Two Merkava tanks were also destroyed at the al- Dabshah position. [passage omitted]

NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondents have reported that the occupation forces reinforced their positions in the western sector with several heavy artillery batteries over the past two days.

Elsewhere, as part of Israel's continuous naval siege, Israeli naval boats cruised off the al-Naqurah-Sarafand coast and fired flares last night.

Islamic Resistance: Israeli Advance Attempt Foiled

NC0412065795 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 4 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Islamic Resistance has declared that one of its units monitored a Zionist

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advance attempt toward the army's deserted barracks in al-Nabatiyah at 2230 last night. The Resistance fire support unit attacked the Zionist infiltrators, scoring direct hits. The advancing Zionist unit was forced to retreat. [passage omitted]

Villages Shelled, Mock Raids Reported

NC0412120795 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 4 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Israeli warplanes are flying at high altitude over al-Nabatiyah and Iqlim al-Tuffah after conducting mock raids, during which Lebanese Army ground defenses confronted the Israeli planes.

The Israeli occupation forces began their air and ground attacks after directing an intensive artillery bombardment at the villages of the central and eastern sectors.

According to the most recent security reports, two Israeli helicopters raked the al-'Ayshiyah hills in Iqlim al-Tuffah, using large-caliber machine guns. Israeli artillery pounded al-Nabatiyah al-Fawqa, the army's deserted barracks in al-Nabatiyah, the outskirts of Kafr Tibnit, the woods of Sujud, and the al-Litani River basin. [passage omitted]

Fadlallah: U.S. Seeks To Control Mideast Resources

LD0112180995 Tehran IRNA in English 1748 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beirut, Dec. 1, IRNA — Lebanon's prominent cleric, al-'Allamah Fadlallah said here on Friday [1 December] the U.S. is on the verge of exercising control over the natural resources of the Middle East.

Addressing the Friday prayer congregation in Beirut, Fadlallah condemned the ominous conspiracies of the U.S. in the region.

He went on to say that due to rich natural resources of the area, the place has been turned into a battlefield where the rival countries try to fight each other in order to ink international pacts to get their part of share of the resources.

The ayatollah pointed out that the visiting U.S. envoys make every endeavor to persuade both Lebanon and Syria not to object to the so-called Middle East peace process in a bid to give concession to the Zionist regime.

He appreciated the uncompromising policy of the Islamic Resistance Movement in Lebanon and fully endorsed the retaliatory measures of the resistance movement through their rocket attack on the northern part of the occupied Palestine.

The Lebanese friday prayer leader said that the United States has tried to deal a blow to the European Union (EU) conference being held in Barcelona, (Spain) for the fact that the United States very well knows that if either the U.S. or the EU happens to gain control of the Middle East natural resources, it would enjoy an upper hand economically in controlling the other.

Ayatollah Fadlallah said the Barcelona conference was a response to the economic conference held in Amman earlier which was sponsored by the U.S.

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TV Reports on Passage of 'Special' UN Resolution

JN0112210395 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 1 Dec 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] The UN General Assembly passed a special resolution with a majority of 121-1 votes denouncing Israel's practices against the rights of the Syrian Arab citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan. Only Israel voted against the resolution.

The resolution stipulates that while it is worried that the occupied Syrian Golan still has been under Israel's occupation since 1967, while it recalls its previous relevant resolutions urging Israel to end its occupation of territories, while it reiterates that seizing territories is impermissible under the UN Charter, and while it asserts that the 1949 Geneva Convention on the protection of civilians in wartime applies to this situation, the UN General Assembly urged Israel, the occupation authority, to abide by the occupied Syrian Golan-related resolutions, particularly Resolution No. 497, which says that Israel's decision to impose its laws, its legal jurisdiction, and its administration on the occupied Syrian Golan is null and void and has no international legal weight.

The General Assembly also urged Israel, the occupation authority, to cancel its decision immediately and to refrain from changing the Golan's civilizational character, demographic features, infrastructure, and legal status and also from establishing settlements in particular.

The UN General Assembly also decided that all the legislative and administrative measures, which Israel, the occupation authority, has taken or will take to change the character of the occupied Arab Golan and its legal status are null and void, that they constitute a flagrant violation of international law and the 1949 Geneva Convention on the protection of civilians in wartime, and that they have no legal weight.

The UN General Assembly also urged Israel to refrain from imposing Israeli citizenship and identity cards on Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan and also from taking oppressive measures against the Golan inhabitants.

The resolution contains the General Assembly's denunciation of Israel's violation of the 1949 Geneva Convention on the protection of civilians in wartime. The General Assembly once again urged the UN member states not to recognize any of the said legislative and administrative measures and also called on the UN secretary general to provide the General Assembly's upcoming session with a report on implementing this resolution.

Al-Asad: Country 'Serious' About 'Just' Peace

JN0212151595 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Under the patronage of President Hafiz al-Asad, the fourth general conference of the Arab Youths Union, Basil al-Asad session, opened at Damascus University auditorium this morning. The conference is held under the motto: "Toward a young Arab generation faithful to the causes of its nation — a generation that will defend the Arab nation's rights and build its future." Comrade Dr. Sulayman Qaddah, assistant regional secretary of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, deputized for President Hafiz al-Asad. [passage omitted] Dr. Qaddah gave a speech at the beginning of which he conveyed President Hafiz al-Asad's greetings, wishes, appreciation, and pride in the Arab youths. [passage omitted]

Comrade Qaddah spoke about Syria's position on the peace process. He said: Syria is sincere and serious about realizing a just, comprehensive, and honorable peace that would put an end to occupation, injustice, and aggression and liberate all of the Golan and southern Lebanon — a peace that would safeguard the Arab dignity and rights and provide security for all. Such a peace should be acceptable to the peoples and defended by the generations. Syria will never accept any measure that would denigrate its sovereignty or dignity or relinquish a single right of the nation.

He said: The success of the peace process hinges on Israel's adoption of a practical position demonstrating full compliance with the relevant resolutions of international legitimacy and withdrawal from the Golan and southern Lebanon back to 4 June 1967 borders. It is also contingent on Israel's acceptance of equitable, balanced, and equal [mutakafi'ah wa mutawazinah wa mutasawiyah] security measures on the basis of the international resolutions and the land- for-peace principle.

Concluding his speech, Dr. Qaddah hailed participants in the conference and the Arab youths throughout the Arab homeland. He said he hopes the conference will succeed in achieving its objectives.

Foreign Minister Receives Russia's Posuvalyuk

JN0312174895 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' received Viktor Posuvalyuk, Russia's deputy foreign minister, today. Russian Ambassador in Damascus Viktor Gogitidze attended the meeting.

Posuvalyuk briefed al-Shar' on the results of his talks in Israel concerning the peace process, especially the

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Syrian track. Posuvalyuk expressed Russia's support for Israel's withdrawal from the Golan to the 4 June 1967 lines to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region. The two sides discussed developments in the region and bilateral relations.

Al-Ahmar Returns From U.S., Netherlands Visits

JN0312133095 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Comrade 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and head of the Pan-Arab Committee on Expatriates, returned to Damascus yesterday after participating with his accompanying delegation in the 11th conference of the Federation of Pan-American Arab Organizations, FEAARAB, which recently convened in Miami in the United States.

On his way home, comrade al-Ahmar and his delegation visited Amsterdam where he met with the Syrian Arab community in the Netherlands and Belgium. The meeting was attended by Dr. Tawfiq Sallum, Syrian charge d'affaires in Brussels, and 'Abd-al-Mun'im Shaman, Syria's honorary consul to the Netherlands.

During this meeting, comrade al-Ahmar discussed the achievements made during the march of construction and comprehensive development in Syria under struggler comrade President Hafiz al-Asad. He pointed out that our people's celebrations on the silver jubilee of the glorious Corrective Movement expressed people's loyalty to their leader, their commitment to the corrective policy, and their determination to continue the march of full liberation and comprehensive construction.

Discussing Arab developments, al-Ahmar said that Arab unity should be an objective guiding all Arabs, steering every pan-Arab action, and prompting the consolidation of efforts in order to develop formulas for joint Arab action and protect the higher pan-Arab interests. He said: This is necessary to confront the challenges of Arab development and the plans designed to eliminate the Arabs' identity and pan-Arab existence.

Al-Ahmar reviewed developments in the Arab region, the peace process, and Syria's principled and consistent position which represents the pan-Arab interest and expresses the Arab rights. He also discussed expatriate issues and Syria's interest in its and other Arab expatriates as well as the activities, plans, and policies of the Pan-Arab Committee on Expatriates in order to consolidate and enhance work with expatriates

Al-Ahmar stressed the importance of organizing the Arab expatriates in Europe, the United States, and elsewhere. He added that this would pool and develop resources in order to foster the role of Arab communities in their new homelands, defend their interests, and strengthen the links with their motherland.

Comrade al-Ahmar listened to the Syrian community's proposals and issues and responded to questions on various issues. The Syrian expatriates voiced pride in the policy of the great Arab leader Hafiz al-Asad as well as their love for him and appreciation for his efforts. They asserted that leader al-Asad's position is the only hope to preserve Arab rights and safeguard Arab pride and dignity.

The Syrian expatriates also expressed their determination to remain loyal soldiers to Syria and its leader in the march of construction and liberation and in the genuine work to achieve our nation's pan-Arab objectives.

Editorial Views Israeli Escalation in Lebanon

JN0312184495 Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic 30 Nov 95 p 1

[Editorial by Chief Editor Turki Saqr: "The Peace Process Cannot Dance to Provocative Tunes"]

[FBIS Translated Text] People have grown accustomed to seeing Israel attack southern Lebanon without any reason. Israel most often advances flimsy pretexts to justify such attacks. This is a familiar occurrence. But what is strange is that this Israeli escalation, which has reached the level of military hysteria, is being seen at a time when Shim'on Peres has continued to speak of peace and of his purported desire to activate the peace process in the aftermath of his assumption of the premiership and Labor Party leadership. As for his new Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq, he has followed suit.

Based on an examination of the situation in southern Lebanon over the past few days, one reaches the indisputable conclusion that it was the Israeli rulers who ordered an escalation of the situation there, and who ordered the bombardment and destruction of villages, homes, and residential areas, using various kinds of weapons. There is no shred of doubt that they were fully aware that this aggressive act would draw a natural reaction that is an act of self-defense. This reaction reflects the legitimate right to resist occupation and its crimes.

Only the stupid could think that the Israeli escalation in southern Lebanon was not premeditated by the Israeli rulers. Hence, the following question arises: What is the objective of the Israeli rulers behind all this?

Is this escalation a preemptive act coming as it does ahead of the tour of the region by Ross, which will be followed by a similar tour by Christopher? It should be

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recalled that Israel has repeatedly used this tactic. This fresh and deliberate escalation is aimed at pressuring Lebanon and Syria into softening their stands in the peace talks. The bellicose statements made by some Israeli officials yesterday and the day before yesterday corroborate this argument.

At any rate, some analysts see other reasons for this escalation. They believe that by its fierce military operations in southern Lebanon, the Peres government might have sought to outbid Israeli extremists and project an image of willingness to use force to promote the Israeli expansionist and settlement policies, which are cherished by the extremists.

Others believe that the Israeli Government is fighting what it calls Hizballah's terrorism, and pursuing Hizballah men everywhere. They contend that this course was pursued by successive Israeli governments.

Regardless of the motives that prompted the Peres government to pursue these aggressive acts, these acts cannot grant this government "a certificate of good conduct." Moreover, these acts cannot create a propitious climate for the resumption of the peace talks. They cannot put the talks on the track conducive to a solution.

Some members of the new Israeli Government might have cherished the negotiating tactic used by the Americans during their negotiations with the Vietnamese. For it is public knowledge that barbarous and devastating U.S. air raids preceded each and every round of negotiations with the Vietnamese. Nonetheless, it must be made clear that these aggressive acts did not soften the stands of the Vietnamese negotiators, that the Americans were forced to leave Vietnam in a hurry, and that the U.S. ambassador in Saigon, which is now known as Hanoi, and his embassy staff had to save their skin by boarding a helicopter on the roof of the U.S. Embassy.

We are saying that these members of the Israeli Government must recall this, because the use of intimidation and threats with Syria is useless. Moreover, the fact that Israeli officials have continued to mention Syria in their discussions of the developments of the situation in southern Lebanon will not undermine Syria's position, which calls for the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace that ensures the interests of all sides. The Israeli tactic will only reveal to the entire world community the party that is fomenting tension and turbulence, threatening the use of force, and seeking to force its dictates by intimidation and terrorism.

If some members of the Peres government seek to thwart the efforts of the extremists, who oppose peace and who call for adhering to the myths of the promised land, by launching air, land, and sea raids against Lebanon, then these people should know that peace has a certain road and extremism and the policy of aggression has another, and that the two roads cannot intersect. The efforts of the anti-peace forces cannot be thwarted by trying to compete with them in terrorism and extremism, but by taking a strategic decision to achieve peace and by offering its requirements and prerequisites. Rabin's attempt to appease the extremists' line and the anti-peace groups did not benefit him.

Those who say that the Israeli aggressive acts aim at resisting Hizballah and its terrorism are in fact covering their eyes. It is well known that there is a very big difference between the legitimate right to self defense and the occupation of others' territory, and between resistance against foreign occupation and the terrorism exercised by the occupier against the people of the occupied territory. What is even more important is the difference between the terrorism of an individual or a group of individuals, and the terrorism exercised by the state, with its agencies, institutions, and armed forces. When one mentions state terrorism, one flagrant example comes to mind; that of the terrorism exercised by the consecutive Israeli governments.

How can one understand the overlooking of state terrorism and considering it legitimate, when the legitimate resistance against occupation is labeled with terrorism? Why should those who fought the Nazi occupation be considered heroes, who are commemorated every now and then, while those who are defending their country in Lebanon against the occupiers are accused of terrorism?

No one in the world can deny the Lebanese people their right to defend themselves against the occupiers, who must leave in accordance with Resolution 425 and the principles of international legitimacy. We tell those people who say that Syria has an influence over Hizballah, and that it must use this influence to force Hizballah to stop firing katyusha rockets, that Syria has always opposed terrorism and supported the right of every people to defend their land, sovereignty, and freedom. Syria also believes that a solution in southern Lebanon can be achieved by removing tension, or, in other words, by the withdrawal of the Israeli occupation troops to beyond the international borders in southern Lebanon. Lebanon, through its officials, pledged to maintain security on the Lebanese side. He who is concerned about the peace process would not start provocations or threaten to use, and use, force. Moreover, there is a certain party, or certain parties, that have an influence over Israel, so why do they not use their influence to persuade Israel to abandon aggression and its endeavor to escalate tension whenever a new phase of the peace talks arrive.

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Syria has always cooperated to arrive at a just and comprehensive peace. It continues to adhere to the peace process and seeks to arrive at its objectives in accordance with the set principles. The fate of the peace process now hinges on the Peres government, however, the current actions in southern Lebanon are not compatible with the signs and statements made by Peres, Baraq, and others on the desire to lead successful peace negotiations. The peace process cannot progress in the presence of provocations and the Israeli military escalation. This process can progress by ending occupation and returning land and rights to their owners.

Radio Wishes Ross Success in Regional Mission

JN0312165595 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1235 GMT 3 Dec 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: The moment the peace process on the Syrian track was halted for reasons well-known to the entire world, Syria expressed its readiness to resume the peace talks in accordance with bases set from the beginning and on which the peace process was launched four years ago. When Israel placed obstacles and violated what was agreed upon within the framework of what at the time was called the conceptual understanding [al-tafahum al-mafhumati], Syria stressed its adherence to the peace process and its eagerness to achieve its desired objective vis-a-vis a just peace. This peace should be one that is in line with the international community's trends and that achieves justice ['adalah], equality [musawah], and takafu' [equitability].

Moreover, when Israel confronted domestic terrorism — which led to the assassination of its Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin — when Shim'on Peres became the leader of the Israeli peace process, and when signs of political rationalism [ta'aqqul] and inclinations toward peace appeared, Syria iterated its willingness to push the peace process forward. This is in order to achieve tangible progress that is in line with the essence, contents, and objectives of the peace process. Syria overcame some contradictions in Israeli statements, which are back to playing the tune of a partial withdrawal and keeping some territories and of exaggerating the concept of security. Syria did so to preserve the peace process and efforts to rescue it from the stalemate and obstruction imposed by Israeli intransigence.

While Dennis Ross, coordinator of the peace process, is conducting a tour of the region, the first of its kind after a halt to the peace process and after Rabin's assassination, Syria renews its stand and stresses its commitment to the peace process according to the bases and guarantees set for it. Moreover, Syria adheres to the constants and bases of the peace efforts. Syria's position on peace remains unchanged; that is, full withdrawal for full peace. There is no room to discuss any idea — whether it is inside or outside the framework of warning stations — which undermines the principles of national sovereignty on the ground. Peace should take on its logical and objective dimensions. Experiences of peoples throughout history provide us with the pertinent guidelines enshrined in international legitimacy and its resolutions.

Of course, we hope that Dennis Ross will succeed in his mission, especially during his stop in Israel where obstacles pile up and where the solution starts. The solution hinges on the new ideas that Ross could be carrying. It is not enough that Syria's stand is clear, defined, and well known to the entire world. Indeed, there should be corresponding clarity on the other side — something which has not yet been achieved despite four years since the inception of the peace process. We can only say that the peace process has shouldered enough burdens and obstacles. It is high time to put it on the right and sound track.

Radio: 'Some Obstacles' to Peace Progress Removed

JN0112150195 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 1 Dec 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: The next few days are expected to witness extensive political efforts to resume peace talks on the Syrian-Israeli track. The new Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres is readying himself to leave for Washington and meet with President Clinton carrying ideas and proposals. Informed Israeli circles leaked reports that the upcoming Syrian-Israeli talks should cover all the outstanding issues, including withdrawal from the Golan, and not only the issue of security as in the past. Israeli circles also leaked reports that Peres' government does not insist anymore on the ground observation posts in the Golan and that these posts can be replaced with aerial monitoring via satellites. If these reports are true, then some obstacles impeding a potential progress on the Syrian track actually have been removed, however, caution will continue to prevail until the Israeli position is made clear.

Syria, as is well-known, emphasized at the Barcelona conference a straightforward and strong commitment to peace in the region. It also said that it is ready for a full peace in return for a full Israeli withdrawal. Syria also said that it will accept an equitable and even-handed

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[mutakafi'ah wa muta'adilah] security arrangement on both sides of 4 June 1967 borders, because the Israeli occupation troops should withdraw beyond this line in accordance with Security Council resolutions. Lebanon said it would do the same if Israel complied with Security Council Resolution 425 and withdrew from occupied southern Lebanon.

In sum, achieving peace on the inseparable Syrian and Lebanese tracks is contingent on a positive Israeli decision to effect a full withdrawal and implement the resolutions of international legitimacy. Everybody knows that peace on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks will lead to a comprehensive peace in the region. Thus the ball is now in the Israeli court.

In fact, Israel's officials have been suggesting for a long time in their statements that conclusive decisions should be made. The former prime minister frequently spoke about painful and difficult decisions. Shim'on Peres did the same when he was foreign minister. We have heard various statements by Israeli ministers and officials to the effect that peace is impossible without returning all of the Golan to Syria. These officials based their statements on past experience. Throughout the four years since the Madrid conference was held, Syria has not budged a single inch from its position on restoring the Golan and Israel's withdrawal back to June 1967 lines. At the same time, Syria has showed flexibility regarding the security arrangements to remove the fears of the Israelis and to provide security for all when it proposed even-handed and symmetrical [muta'adilah wa mutanazirah] security arrangements.

Therefore, squandering more time and efforts for the sake of maneuvers and procrastination is futile, because Syria can never relinquish a grain of its soil or part of its sovereignty. This issue is settled. The Israeli withdrawal should be full and comprehensive. By doing so, Israel would address the essence of the basic issues and respond to the essential and objective foundations of peace, the peace process would proceed forward and come to fruition, thus leading to a just and comprehensive peace.

Columnist on Objectives of Israeli 'Aggression'

JN0312205895 Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic 30 Nov 95 p 3

[Article by Salih Salih: "The Israeli Aggression's Objective Is To Subjugate Lebanon"; from the "With the Events" column]

[FBIS Translated Text] Israel escalated its aggression against Lebanon over the past three days, targeting villages with scores of brutal raids and more than 700 heavy artillery shells. As a result, a number of citizens were martyred or wounded, and heavy losses were inflicted on property and farms.

It has become clear that through this barbaric aggression, Israel seeks to bring life in southern Lebanon to a halt, something which has actually happened, for schools were brought to a halt, markets were closed, and a wave of evacuations from the targeted areas began.

The Lebanese resistance had no choice but to reply to the rancorous aggression. It fired missiles toward the border strip and the Galilee area in occupied Palestine. Thus, it forced more than 250,000 Zionist settlers to stay in their shelters after many of them were wounded when their houses were hit.

The Israeli escalation coincided with Israeli officials' statements in which they rejected Resolution 425 and the right of Lebanon and its people to liberate their land and to live on it in peace.

Moreover, during the mini cabinet meeting yesterday, some Israeli ministers called for dealing a large-scale strike to Lebanon. This is to prepare the internal and regional atmosphere to accept this aggression as a prelude to a premeditated series of aggressions which are aimed at subjugating Lebanon and forcing it to accept all that Israel wants to impose on it.

This is what the Israeli rulers think of when they talk about peace. They seek peace through destructive missiles and the internationally-banned artillery shells which are directed against the Arabs, however, they ask these Arabs to keep silent, to submit to them, to suppress their reactions, and not to resist them, or otherwise; they accuse them of being terrorists and of obstructing the peace process. All these are ready-made accusations which they use whenever necessary.

The Israeli rulers should realize that they cannot achieve what they want through the policy of aggression, for Lebanon, which has experienced Israel and its policies, will never accept, under any circumstances, agreements which do not restore its full rights in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy.

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Obstacles to Delineated Policy Towards Afghanistan

96LA0001A Paris LES NOUVELLES D'AFGHANISTAN in French No 68 Apr-Jun 95 pp 7-8

[Article by Mohammad-Reza Djalili, researcher at the University Institute of International Graduate Studies in Geneva: "Iran the Prisoner of a Sectarian Logic"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *Throughout this century, Iran has not managed to define a policy toward Afghanistan that took its Persian dimension into account. We thank Mr. Djalili and the organizers of the colloquium on "Afghanistan From One War To Another," which took place in Geneva on 10 March 1995, for allowing us to publish the last part of his paper on Iranian policy. The complete paper will be published in the future with the seminar's proceedings.*

Having eliminated the constraints of the war with Iraq and no longer having common land borders with Russia, whose imperial designs conditioned Iran's foreign policy for two centuries, 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, who was first elected president in 1989 and reelected in 1993, has relaunched a new Iranian policy toward Afghanistan in the now expanded context of all of Central Asia. And that is something he did not fail to do in developing ties with Kabul and the various factions that are fighting over power—by launching a plan for a new "silk route," which would link Iran to China through Afghanistan, providing new dynamism to the Organization for Economic Cooperation, which exists among Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey, and by expanding it to Afghanistan and the states of Central Asia.

But, as in the past, implementing Iranian policy has come up against insurmountable obstacles in Afghanistan.

The first obstacle is internal to Afghanistan, where, after the departure of the Soviets, civil war replaced the war of resistance against the invader. Not only is it wrong in this context to develop state-to-state relations, but it is becoming ever more imperative for Iran, as for the other powers that are interested in the Afghan situation, to fit its policy into the framework of factional struggles and relationships of fluctuating forces between those rival elements on the Afghan political scene.

From this situation Iranian policy's second difficulty arises. The clerical regime in Tehran has never known how or wanted to play on the ethnic and cultural solidarity that ties a vast segment of Afghans to the people of Iran. It concentrated its support on just Shiite groups, which are mostly in a minority in Afghanistan. This choice alone can help explain the minor role that Iran plays on the Afghan political scene, all the more so since this policy is making the traditional hostility between Shiites and Sunnis even worse and is canceling out any prospect of there being Iranian influence on Sunni movements, even those that are Dari-speaking.

The third constraint on the development of Iranian policy is that country's extreme isolation on the regional and international scene. In order to develop a political program aimed at Afghanistan and, through that country, at Central Asia, Iran needs outside support or at the very least the sympathy of certain states that are important in regional affairs (Russia, Turkey, and Uzbekistan). Thus far, Iran has inspired more mistrust than sympathy, something that in no way facilities the implementation of its policy.

The fourth factor that comes into play is the problem of the Afghan refugees in Iran. This problem weighs on Iranian policy to the extent that the massive return of these refugees, as has occurred several times since 1992, produces either resentment, which is counterproductive to Iran, or further disturbs the situation within Afghanistan itself, which in the final analysis makes the development of a more or less coherent policy toward that country even more difficult [1]. If to this is added the appearance of a certain hostility in some areas of Iran toward the Afghans, one better realizes the importance of the refugee issue in the Iranian-Afghan context.

One other major obstacle to Iranian policy toward Afghanistan is economic. The rapprochement between Iran and Afghanistan in the mid-1970's had been favorably influenced by the improvement of Iran's economic situation in the wake of the first energy crisis. It must be said that, today, with Iran sinking deeper and deeper into an unprecedented economic crisis, the country finds it impossible to get further involved in Afghanistan, no matter what the scenario. In effect, whether the war goes on or stops, an effective Afghan policy requires financial means to support one camp or the other or to help reconstruct the country once peace returns. And Iran has only very modest means.

Tehran Marginalized?

The emergence in 1995 of a new force, the Taleban, has upset Afghanistan's military map. For its part, Iran has reacted to this phenomenon with confusion and mistrust. The taleban are recruited among the Pushto ethnic group, which is Sunni. Pakistan seems to be supplying them with military support, and many observers think that Saudi Arabia could be helping to finance them. On several occasions, the Islamic Republic's official press organs have emphasized that the taleban enjoy U.S. support, a charge that has been taken up by leaders of the Wahdat Shiite party [2]. Under these conditions,

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this advance by the taleban once again risks weakening Iranian positions in Afghanistan and forcing Tehran to play an even more marginal role in the country. But this situation could also result in a redeployment of Iranian alliances in relation to the Afghan factions.

During the second half of the 20th century, relations between Iran and Afghanistan, with a few rare exceptions, have never really experienced the deepening they deserve, given the affinities that exist between the two nations. Today, after the end of the cold war and the disappearance of East-West rivalries, after the collapse of the USSR, and also after the bloody revolutions and wars the two countries have experienced, it is no longer a question of merely establishing good neighborly relationships but rather of going much beyond that. In Iran's case, it is now imperative to see in Afghanistan an essential element, one that cannot be overlooked, in its opening toward Central Asia. In Afghanistan's case, it must profit from this situation and at the right time find the support necessary for its reconstruction from its Iranian neighbor. But, alas, we have not yet reached that point. In Afghanistan, despite its peoples' weariness, the war continues and is even intensifying. In Iran, the government, which is sunk in a crisis of legitimacy and an economic quagmire and which is the prisoner of its own rhetoric, is incapable of exchanging its sectarian approach for a policy that takes the historical and ethnic-cultural dimensions of the relationship between Iran and Afghanistan more into account. If the Afghans do not manage to put the logic of conflict behind them and if the Iranians do not manage to put their aging khomeynism behind them, the bet is that the years and decades ahead will strongly resemble past years and decades.

Footnotes

1. Repatriation operations, which started in 1992, have made it possible to reduce the number of Afghan refugees in Iran. On 30 January 1994, the Iranian Interior Ministry announced that more than a half million Afghan refugees without papers would have to leave the country in the next six months. Out of the 2.8 million Afghans who have sought refuge in Iran since the start of the war, 800,000 had left the country and 700,000 were supposed to follow as part of a UN High Commission for Refugees program (LE MONDE, 2 February 1994).
2. See LE MONDE, 14 February 1995.

Afghanistan

Opposition Faction Calls For Power Sharing

LD0112182195 Tehran IRNA in Persian 1117 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Islamabad, 1 Dec — A spokesman of the [Karim] Khalili faction of Afghanistan's Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami-ye [Islamic Unity Party] has thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for its efforts in finding a peaceful solution to the Afghan crisis through negotiations with Afghan groups.

In an interview with IRNA in Peshawar on Friday [1 December], Abbas Mirza'i pointed to the recent visit of Iran's deputy foreign minister to Afghanistan and said that 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi had in his meeting with the leaders of Hezb-e Wahdat [Unity Party] said that Iran was ready to help Afghanistan overcome its crisis.

The Iranian deputy foreign minister went to Bamian last week and met Karim Khalili and other leaders of this party.

The spokesman of Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami-ye added that his party was not under the control of Iran or any other country.

He stressed that Hezb-e Wahdat was ready to cooperate with the government of [President] Borhanoddin Rabbani on the condition that all the groups were given an equal share of power.

Mirza'i criticized the Un secretary general's special envoy to Afghanistan, Mahmoud Mestiri, for not visiting Bamian province but added that his party would accept any solution which took into account the rights of all factions.

Opposition Groups Fail To Reach Agreement

LD0212105895 Tehran IRNA in Persian 0849 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Islamabad, 2 Dec — Representatives of the Afghan opposition groups meeting in Islamabad have failed to reach an agreement on joint cooperation, despite several days of negotiations.

The Taleban group, Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party], General Dostam's National Movement and Karim Khalili's Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami [Islamic Unity Party] are taking part in the negotiations.

Informed Afghan sources on Saturday [2 December] said in Islamabad that following the recent defeats of the Taleban at the hands of government forces around Kabul, "the Taleban have backed away from their previous political stances."

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According to the said sources, the Taleban have accepted power sharing with other groups but the groups have failed to agree on a joint security force.

An Afghan source in Islamabad said despite numerous rounds of talks, "Afghan Jehadi groups still do not trust the Taleban." In this context, he pointed to the killing of Abdol 'Ali Mazari, the former leader of Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami, by the Taleban in Esfand of last year.

Political analysts believe the Taleban's defeat around Kabul has forced this group to extend its hand toward other Afghan Jehadi groups.

Radio on 'Rumors' of Political Alliances

LD0312205695 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto 1230 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Our correspondent in Peshawar has sent the following report on the expansion of an airport in Khost province, cleaning work in Jalalabad city, and the price rises in Kabul. [passage omitted]

Yesterday a Pakistani Foreign Ministry spokesman avoided commenting on a report which says that a coalition government will be formed by Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] and Rabbani's Jam'iyat-e Eslami [Islamic Society]. The spokesman said that a comment could not be made on this matter until they had a confirmed report.

Rumors are milling around Peshawar about an imminent alliance between Taleban, the Nangarhar Jehadi Council, and the High Coordination Council. Unofficial reports received from those parties indicate that those three groups have reached an agreement against Mr. Rabbani's government and will soon announce it. According to the reports the three sides have agreed that in the forthcoming government the presidency will go to the Taleban and the premiership to the High Coordination Council.

Reports reaching here say that repair work on Khost Airport goes on rapidly. Some reports about the Airport say that it is being repaired for military flights against Kabul but others indicate that it will be used for civilian purposes. [passage omitted]

Pakistani Military Officers Visit Taleban Posts

LD0212201095 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The recent defeats of Benazir Bhutto's Taleban have obliged Pakistani military officers to visit the front lines. Reports reaching BAKHTAR say recently a Pakistani army delegation has visited the Taleban front lines south of Kabul, and has given every member of the Taleban $100 to boast their morale. The Pakistani military officer's visits have increased since the Taleban suffered heavy defeats and lost several areas southeast of Kabul.

The ruthless Taleban aerial and rocket bombardment of Kabul has angered the people of the world. Their defeats have isolated Benazir Bhutto in [word indistinct]. A BAKHTAR correspondent writes that when the Taleban were defeated in Kabul, they started firing rockets into Kabul and bombarded the civilian areas in retaliation. [passage indistinct]

In its recent statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United States asked for an end to fighting in Kabul and for a cease-fire. The statement has condemned the recent attacks, as well as fighting in Kabul under any pretext. Last week Amnesty International too described the continuation of the fighting in Afghanistan as an obstacle in the way of observing human rights. [passage omitted]

Fighting Intensifies South of Kabul

LD0212162195 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto 1230 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The exchange of artillery and heavy weapons fire going on since yesterday in the southern region of Kabul was further intensified this morning .

Citing an Afghan Defense Ministry source, the Central News Unit reports that heavy exchange of fire is going on between warring sides in the Rishkhor and Khairabad hills and in the Sang-e Newishta area of Chahar Asiab. The source did not give any information regarding loss of life and material because of the intensity of firing in the area.

It should be mentioned that government forces, following their successes in the south and southeastern areas of Kabul, have now centered their activities in the south of Kabul in the areas of Rishkhor, Khairabad, and Sang-e Newishta.

Rabbani Troops Start Offensive Against Taleban

LD0312095095 Tehran IRNA in English 0902 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, Dec. 3, IRNA — Forces loyal to President Borhanoddin Rabbani initiated an offensive on Saturday [2 September] night against the Taleban group in the south of Kabul.

Confirming the attack, an informed source at the Afghan Foreign Ministry said government troops will try to push back the Taleban forces at the Chahar Asiab, Sang Nebshe, Kheyrabad and Rish Khvor regions south of

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Kabul in order to keep the capital out of the Taleban's firing range.

The people in the Afghan capital in the past three months have been severely affected by air raids and artillery shelling of the city hence, it is now time to restore peace and security in the capital, noted an Afghan official.

Government forces in the past 24 hours pounded the Taleban positions, destroying part of their military equipment and capturing their positions, he added.

However, no confirmed report on casualties suffered by the two sides is available but massive explosions throughout Kabul indicate fierce battles in the city.

State helicopters and jet fighters till Saturday night took part in the offensive.

The southern region of Kabul fell in the hands of the Taleban in late September. During this period many houses in the city have been destroyed and scores of people have been killed in the bombardments.

Late last week, Afghan government troops in a massive offensive pushed the Taleban forces back by over 20 km, saving the Afghan capital from a complete siege.

Moreover, the Afghan Government has launched a major purge of its army due to its recent defeats in the past three months which are believed to be caused by the treachery of its army commanders.

Offensive Reportedly Stalls

LD0312134095 Tehran IRNA in English 1313 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, Dec. 3, IRNA — The Afghan government forces Saturday [2 December] night launched an offensive against to recapture the southern regions of Kabul from the Taleban student militias. [sentence as received]

An informed source at the Afghan Defence Ministry told IRNA here Sunday morning that the strategic region of Kheyrabad was the scene of heaviest clashes and artillery duels.

According to the reports from Kabul the government troops could advance towards Kheyrabad but soon were forced to retreat due to a counter offensive launched by the Taleban.

In the battle, between Saturday night and Sunday morning, some 15 Taleban troops were killed, tens of others wounded and 5 artillery pieces belonging to them destroyed, the report said.

The government sources noted that the main reason behind the failure of government troops was their refusal to shell, bomb or make missile attacks on villages under control of the Taleban.

The Afghan Government has announced its readiness to accept ceasefire and transfer the power, but the Taleban has rejected the offer out of their conviction that fighting was the only solution to the Afghan crisis.

Government Bombards Taleban Positions Overnight

LD0312163495 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The concentrations and fortifications of Benazir Bhutto's Taleban were smashed last night. Quoting Armed Forces sources, BAKHTAR reports that the fighting started when the Taleban attempted to launch an attack. The (?Islamic Army), however, attacked the enemy's positions and fortifications with precision targeting, and inflicted heavy loss of life and damage on the hireling Taleban.

Overnight the bombers of the Air Force bombarded the Taleban's concentrations. Although no precise report has been received about the loss of life, it is said that dozens of the enemy were killed or injured.

During the attack a Taleban ammunition depot and two heavy weapons were set ablaze.

'Significant' Taleban Position Captured

BK0412094095 Hong Kong AFP in English 0934 GMT 4 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KABUL, Dec 4 (AFP) — Afghan government troops early Monday [4 December] captured a strategic mountain post from the Taleban militia and killed 10 of their men southeast of Kabul, defence sources said.

The army overran a "significant" position at the mouth of the militia-controlled Logar province, 32 kilometers (20 miles) from the besieged capital in an overnight government offensive aimed at securing the area, an official said.

"Capturing the post was significant because our southeast flank is now safer and the new area gives us a stronger position for any further offensive in the region," the official said.

The presidential forces pushed back about 300 Taleban fighters holding the post, captured an ammunitions dump but seized no weapons or prisoners in the move, he added.

Independent confirmation of the attack and death toll was not immediately available.

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Monday's onslaught came five days after troops loyal to President Borhanoddin Rabbani pushed the militiamen out of a 20 kilometer (12 miles) area to the northwest of the scene of the latest fighting.

The Taleban had overrun the area with more than 1,000 men two weeks ago, moving up to a crucial spot just 15 kilometers (nine miles) from the war-torn capital, triggering fears that they may lay siege to the eastern side of Kabul, before breaking into the city.

The successful government push against the Taleban southeast of Kabul has bough the administration some time and lessened the immediate risk of another Taleban offensive against the city, foreign analysts here said.

The militia, who have pledged to topple the government and install Islamic law across the country, last launched a major attempt to break into Kabul in October, following an earlier unsuccessful bid in March.

'Massive Blaze' Reported in Presidential Palace

BK0412104795 Hong Kong AFP in English 1031 GMT 4 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, Dec 4 (AFP) — A massive blaze destroyed a soldiers' barracks at Kabul's presidential palace early Monday [4 December], but no injuries were reported, military sources said.

President Borhanoddin Rabbani was not in the palace compound when the fire tore through a 19th century colonial-style building about 250 meters (825 feet) from his office at about 6 a.m (0130 GMT), presidential palace sources told AFP.

The blaze broke out when a fire in a wood-burning stove used to warm the presidential guards' quarters spread onto the wooden floors of the old building, before enveloping the two-storey structure in flames, soldiers said.

Officers at the palace ruled out any form of military strike by the Taleban militia besieging Kabul as the cause of the blaze.

Fire fighters arrived on the scene within minutes of the fire being spotted, and all the military personel in the building were evacuated to safety, Mohammed Farid, one of the soldiers present when the blaze broke out, said.

"Some men were cold and tired as they had just returned from the front so they lit the stove," he said.

"They were sleeping when some of them awoke to see flames spreading across the floors," he added. "Everybody jumped up and ran from the building before calling the fire brigade."

Firemen were still battling mid Monday to put out the last traces of the fire, which totally destroyed the building, sending the upper floor crashing to the earth.

The imposing yellow and white stucco-clad building was one of the more impressive and elegant structures in the massive presidential palace complex, made up of a motley mix of architectural styles.

***Muslim Republics Interested But Uncommitted**

96LA0001B Paris LES NOUVELLES D'AFGHANISTAN in French No 68, Apr-Jun 95 pp 9-10

[Article by Olivier Roy: "Central Asia Paying Attention but Not Getting Very Involved"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *Owing to the instability of their southern neighbor, to fear of "Islamist" contagion for regimes controlled by former communist apparatchiks, and to ethnic, linguistic, and historical ties, the three Central Asian countries bordering on Afghanistan are very concerned by events unfolding in that country. But their degree of involvement in the conflict seems to be remaining limited.*

The three countries bordering on Afghanistan (Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikstan) are obviously following the Afghan situation closely, all the more because the populations on either side of the border belong to the same ethnic groups. But these countries have no coordination in their Afghan policy and are pursuing different objectives.

Turkmenistan is not projecting itself as a protector of Afghan Turkmen, who have no political or military organization of their own (generally speaking they follow either Dostam or Isma'il Khan). Turkmenistan's obsession is to open up a trade route toward the south by retaking the Herat-Qandahar road; it wants to open itself up to the outside world in relation to both Russia and Iran. So Turkmenistan is attempting to stabilize the situation in the northwest part of Afghanistan and is vainly but steadfastly trying to reach an agreement between Dostam and Isma'il Khan. So, in October 1993, on the Turkman national holiday, President Niyazof had the two rivals shake hands in front of television cameras, but there was no follow-up. Turkmenistan is unquestionably the only country bordering on Afghanistan that genuinely wants to see peace there and which is taking care not to support an armed group that would be loyal to it. It is in Turkmenistan that the Kabul government's armed forces come to purchase their kerosene at market prices. Turkmenistan has opened consulates in Mazar-e Sharif and Herat. Air service even operated between Tchardjou and Mazar while it is possible to cross the land

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border without too many difficulties at Torghundi. So Turkmenistan has an open and uncomplicated attitude toward Afghanistan. But the role it can play is above all economic (opening up to the outside world), since Turkmenistan's political influence in relation to the heavyweights, Iran and Pakistan, is still weak.

No Major Afghan Policy

Uzbekistan has a more defensive, closed policy. Tashkent fears fundamentalist contagion from Afghanistan and is also mistrustful of the actions of Iranians and Pakistanis, who are all suspected of supporting Uzbek Islamists. Above all else, Uzbekistan is being very careful to seal off its southern border, and to do so the best way is to have a bridgehead on the other side of the border. In the most fortuitous way, this bridgehead has been supplied by Dostam: as an Uzbek and a former head of the communist militia, he is well known to Tashkent. But Uzbekistan has no major Afghan policy; in the tradition of Afghan doctrine bequeathed by two generations of Soviet experts, the Uzbeks think any Kabul government should be run by the Pushtos. So they do not really quarrel with Pakistani primacy in the political game south of the Hindu Kush and are not pushing Dostam to assume power in Kabul. They are uninterested in the tactical game (successive alliances of Dostam with Mas'ud and Hekmatyar). What they want is an Uzbek and anti-Islamist bastion that would seal off the south from their border on the Afghan side. So they are supplying Dostam with whatever will make it possible for him to survive and hold on (electricity, gasoline, etc.). But Dostam is far from being Tashkent's vassal. Between Afghan and former Soviet Uzbeks (as between Tajiks on both sides of the Amu Darya), recent history has dug a cultural gap. Relations between Tashkent and Dostam are not true relations of confidence: on several occasions Tashkent has required payment in hard currency for the electricity supplied by the high tension line. It is not very probable, as has been said, that Tashkent's military aviation intervened to help Dostam in 1994. The Uzbek Army is still very embryonic.

One other key factor behind Tashkent's attitude arises from the relations it maintains with Tajikistan and Russia. The Uzbeks have never hidden their desire to exercise some sort of trusteeship over neighboring Tajikstan. So they do not wish to see the Afghan Tajiks become too powerful, something that might give comfort to a nationalist government in Dushanbe, putting any issue of Islam aside. So they mistrust Mas'ud. But, at the same time, the Uzbeks have just freed themselves of Russian influence, which restrains their ambition on Tajikistan and keeps them in an unequal system of economic exchanges. If Uzbek and Russian interests can converge in the short term (hostility toward the Islamic-democratic forces that held power in Dushanbe between May and November 1992), in the long term, the Uzbeks want to erase Russian influence in the area and in Tajikistan in particular. That is why they are currently opposed to the "koulabis"' regime in Dushanbe protected by the Russians and have made overtures to the Tajik opposition while at the same time supporting their champion: the leader of the northern province, Abdulajanov (who has much calmer relations with the opposition based in Afghanistan). Finally, to demonstrate how complex the picture is, one must know that the Afghan charge d'affaires in Tashkent, Aman, is a Tajik and a former communist, but today he is a fierce defender of the Rabbani government's interests against the Uzbeks, the Russians, and Dostam.

Fairly Good Relations

Tajikistan's position is more complex. After the civil war in 1992, the opposition, led by the Islamic Renaissance Party, took refuge in Afghanistan, in particular in areas controlled by Mas'ud (Konduz and Taloqan). Ever since it has been carrying out armed operations in Tajik territory, opposed to both Russian border guards and the Dushanbe government's troops. Moscow regularly accuses local Afghan commandos of taking part in these attacks. Now, strangely enough, relations between the government in Dushanbe and the government in Kabul are rather good. The first reason is that the two governments are anxious to be recognized as full-fledged actors in regional politics and not as being submissive to the respective trusteeship of Moscow and Islamabad. The fact of mutual recognition is a first affirmation of their independence. Isolated on the Central Asian scene by an Uzbekistan that is almost hostile and under Russian influence, the Dushanbe government insists on maintaining proper relations with its southern neighbor. Second, it is clear that Afghanistan's Tajiks have no political design on Tajikistan. Afghanistan's Tajiks are fighting on the side of the government in Afghanistan and not on behalf of the creation of a greater Tajikistan, just as Afghan Pushtos, Uzbeks, and Baluchis are making no effort to bring about the political unity of their ethnic group beyond the borders. The support given the Tajik opposition comes from either Arab fundamentalist circles or local commandos. Kabul's eventual support for the Tajik opposition is given within the context of a big bargaining operation: the opening of the Afghan-Tajik border in order to open up the areas held by the Djamiat in Afghanistan to the outside world. Now it is Russian border guards and not the Dushanbe government that runs and closes the border. So for Kabul there is no quarrel with Tajikistan but rather with the

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Russians. Last, it should not be forgotten that many "border incidents" are due to conflicts tied to drug trafficking; now traffickers' networks are well established on either side of the border, and they have extensively penetrated both the Tajik and the Russian administrations. Many fights are much less political than official communiques would suggest. Today, now that almost all Tajik civilian refugees have returned to the country, thanks to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, it is clear that the presence of Tajik fighters in Afghanistan somewhat escapes the decision-making and oversight of Kabul, which cannot really help them or expel them. So the factors underlying the civil war in Tajikistan remain largely internal, and the presence of Tajik fighters in the north of Afghanistan depends more on local conditions and foreign aid than on the Kabul government's strategy.

The good quality of relations between Dushanbe and Kabul was seen in the visit by President Rakhmanov to Kabul in August 1993. But, it is clear that Tajikistan, weakened and deprived of both resources and foreign policy, will not play any role in the prospects for peace in Afghanistan, either positively or negatively. Given that neither of the two countries has territorial claims on the other and that no one is thinking of a greater Tajikistan and that Dushanbe has no influence on Afghan Tajiks, the only issue that means anything is that of the border (movement of goods, weapons, drugs, etc.). Now the border is completely monitored by Russian troops, who do not even inform the Dushanbe government of decisions affecting its opening and closing.

Taking Revenge on Mas'ud

Whereas Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have their own policy toward Afghanistan, which is in no way secretly controlled by Moscow, behind the issue of Tajikistan, it is really the Russian role that is involved. The only toehold Moscow is hanging onto in the area is Tajikistan. In this regard, Moscow has less of a strategy than an account to settle. Moscow is pretty much uninterested in what takes place in Kabul itself: like the Iranians and the Uzbeks, the Russian think a Pushto should govern in Kabul and accept the idea of a dominant role for the Pakistanis, with whom relations have gotten decidedly better since the end of the war. On the other hand, it is clear that many Russian circles want vengeance for the Afghan humiliation by maintaining a civil war (to show that "in our time at least, there was more stability"). In particular, the Russian military obviously wants to make Mas'ud pay for his successes by setting up a blockade of his area.

So it is clear that none of the Central Asian republics will play a key role in the development of a political solution in Afghanistan. If Turkmenistan has a positive role that will assume its full dimension by opening up the west of Afghanistan to the rest of the world and helping it take off economically, Uzbekistan's closed and conservative attitude will no doubt evolve toward a form of neutrality as soon as a more stable and broader government is in place in Kabul. Tashkent will play Dostam as long as there as no other alternative but will not go to war for him.

The Central Asian republics will ratify any solution that gains the Afghans' approval; and the Russians will end up getting used to it, but they will bring to it all of the ill will that resentment and imperial nostalgia can generate.

India

Congress-I To Protest at Madras U.S. Consulate

BK0112145595 Madras DINAMALAR in Tamil 26 Nov 95 p 3

[FBIS Translated Text] Madras, 26 Nov — The Congress-I minorities wing has decided to stage a demonstration in front of the U.S. Consulate General in Madras on 16 December to protest U.S. support for Pakistan, which is instigating violence in Kashmir.

The meeting of the office holders of the Madras Central District Congress-I minorities wing was held in Madras yesterday. The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Sirajuddin and was attended by Congress-I MP's Jayanti Natarajan and Akbar Basha; Ranganathan and Kumaradass, members of the Legislative Assembly; and other special invitees.

The meeting passed the following resolutions:

Pakistan is extending support to the secessionists in Kashmir. The United States has decided to supply fighter planes and arms to Pakistan. This is detrimental to the security of India. Therefore, a demonstration will be held in front of the U.S. Consulate General in Madras on 16 December to protest against this U.S. tendency. Congress-I leaders will participate.

Separate Lok Sabha and assembly constituencies should be created for minorities.

The government should take appropriate steps to prevent communal and sectarian clashes.

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Rao Meets Russian Minister; Festival Opens

BK0212093395 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1530 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India and Russia have reiterated their determination to expedite the proposal of the Indo-Russian Joint Commission so as to further promote the multifaceted relations between the two countries. This was expressed at a meeting between the prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, and the deputy prime minister of Russia, Mr. Yuriy F. Yarov, in New Delhi this morning. Mr. Narasimha Rao said India was looking forward to organizing Indian Days of Culture in Russia next summer.

A 15-day Russian cultural festival, "Russian Days of Culture in India", opened in New Delhi this evening. The festival was jointly inaugurated by the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, and the deputy prime minister of Russia, Mr. Yarov. The festival will also travel to six other major cities of the country. Speaking on the occasion, the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, said cultural festivals like this have played a crucial role in laying the bedrock of Indo- Russian relations. Recalling the long-standing cultural ties between Russia and India, Mr. Yarov said his government would do everything to make the forthcoming Indian festival in Russia a grand success. The distinguished gathering included the human resource development minister, Mr. Madhavrao Scindia; the minister of state for education, Ms. Selja; Russian minister for culture, Mr. Sidorov; and the chairman of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Mr. Basant Sathe.

Kashmir Cleric Offers To Mediate in Hostage Crisis

BK0112142295 Hong Kong AFP in English 1123 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Srinagar, India, Dec 1 (AFP) — Kashmir's leading Moslem cleric offered Friday [1 December] to act as a mediator in a bid to secure the release of four Western tourists held by a shadowy Moslem separatist group for nearly five months.

"I will not hesitate to act as a mediator if it can bring about the early release of the foreign tourists," said Umar Farooq, the 22-year-old head priest of the Jama Masjid, the main mosque in Srinagar, the Kashmir summer capital.

Farooq, who is also chairman of the All-Party Kashmir Freedom Conference, told AFP that the umbrella organization better kno@n as the Huriyat was eager to secure the release of the hostages held by the separatist group Al-Faran.

"We are desperately looking for contact with Al-Faran," he said. "They have been contacting the government but never us to resolve the issue." "We are against kidnappings, which are not only inhumane but also anti-Islamic" he said. "Those who are fighting for freedom should never curb the freedom of others."

Farooq, who returned recently from a three-month tour of the United States and Britain aimed at drumming up support for the Kashmiri secessionist movemcnt in Kashmir, said the kidnapping was harming the cause.

"Kashmiris are being dubbed as kidnappers in developed countries," he said. "It was difficult to make them understand that this act has not been done by those who are fighting for self-rule in Kashmir."

Al-Faran, the previously unknown Moslem separatist group which kidnapped the four tourists in early July, has ignored previous appeals by Huriyat leaders to release the captives.

Al-Faran has demanded the release of 15 Moslem militants from Indian prisoLs in exchange for Britons Paul Wells, 23, and Keith Mangan, 33, American Donald Hutchings, 42, and German Dirk Hasert, 26.

The four were kidnapped by Al-Faran while trekking in the mountains around Pahalgam. A 27-year-old Norwegian, Hans-Christian Ostro, was abducted at the same time and beheaded by the militants in August. The Indian authorities have repeatedly ruled out exchanging any prisoners for the hostages and said a rescue operation would endanger their lives.

More than 12,000 people have died in Kashmir, India's only Moslem-majority state, since 1989 when Islamic rebels stepped up the drive against Indian rule.

Al-Faran Calls For Mediation by Kashmir Leaders

BK0212120995 Hong Kong AFP in English 1204 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Srinagar, India, Dec 2 (AFP) — A hardline separatist guerrilla group holding four Western hostages for almost five months in Kashmir called on Moslem leaders on Saturday [2 December] to negotiate on their behalf with the Indian government.

The Al-Faran group urged the All Party Hurriyat Conference, a forum of 30 Kashmiri political and rebel groups, to negotiate with New Delhi on their demand for the release of 15 jailed comrades in a swap for the four Westerners.

The Al-Faran offer was sent to the AFP office in Srinagar, Kashmir's summer capital.

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"The Hurriyat must negotiate with the (Indian) government so that our demands are accepted because Al-Faran is not going to release the hostages until the demands are met," the group said in its 25- line statement.

The hardline group is holding Britons Paul Wells, 23, and Keith Mangan, 33, American Donald Hutchings, 42, and German Dirk Hasert, 26.

The four were kidnapped by Al-Faran in early J@ly while they were trekking around Pahalgam. A fifth hostage, 27-year-old Norwegian Hans-Christian Ostro, was beheaded by the militants in August by his captors.

The guerrilla group said the four hostages were well but added that twice Indian soldiers encircled them leading to a firefight, which left two of their group members dead.

"Since their abductions we have kept them (hostages) as our honoured guest. We ourselves have suffered hunger and thirst but (we) always took care of our foreign guests," the statement written in the Urdu-language said.

"Keeping all these things in view we canno@ keep the foreigners safe for a long time," Al-Faran said in its first-ever appeal to the umbrella forum to open negotiations with the Indian government, which administers Kashmir.

Al-Faran's contacts with Indian negotiators have virtually petered out with both sides refusing to budge from their hardline stands.

New Delhi refuses to release jailed Al-Faran militants in a swap saying the move would be seen as a precedent by Moslem separatist militants campaigning for an end to Indian rule in Kashmir, which borders Pakistan.

More than 12,000 people have died in Kashmir, India's only Moslem-majority state, since 1989 when Islamic rebels stepped up the drive against Indian rule.

India accuses Pakistan of fomenting insurgency in the disputed state, the spark for two wars between the neighbours.

Islamabad denies the charge but extends diplomatic and moal support to what it describes as the Kashmiris' legitimate campaign for self-determination.

Radio: Muslim Leaders Fail To Contact Al-Faran

BK0312081095 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In occupied Kashmir, at least 12 people have been killed in continued clashes between the freedom fighters and Indian troops. Five people were killed and four others wounded in a powerful explosion in a medical shop in Baramula District, causing extensive damage to the building and adjoining shops. Reports say four people were killed in Pulwama, Gandarbal, and Anantnag areas by Indian troops during their siege and search operations.

Mir Waiz Omar farooq, chairman of All Parties Hurriyat Conference, has reiterated that all Kashmiri political and freedom fighter organizations oppose the kidnapping of foreigners in occupied Kashmir by the so-called Al-Faran and demand their immediate release. In an interview, he said the Hurriyat Conference leaders could not establish contact with the Al-Faran group. According to reports, this group — which has been holding four Western hostages for nearly five months — has called on Muslim leaders to negotiate on their behalf.

'Shoot at Sight' Orders in Riot-Hit Districts

BK0412071995 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0630 GMT 4 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Tamil Nadu, orders to shoot at sight anyone indulging in armed rioting have been issued in Tirunelveli and Chidambaranar districts even as the death toll in group clashes during the last few days went up to 12.

The state director general of police, Mr. W.I. Dhawaram, now camping at Palamcottah in Tirunelveli District, said that the police have been ordered to shoot at anybody indulging in rioting or carrying weapons and explosives in the two affected districts. He said that strict action will be taken against those inciting communal passions and publishing and pasting inflammatory posters.

Five 'Militants' Killed in Kashmir Bomb Explosion

BK0212160395 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, passengers of a bus had a narrow escape this morning when a powerful bomb planted by the militants on the road exploded just a few seconds after the bus had crossed the site. The blast occurred near the border village, Magnar, about 6 km from Punch town. No one was hurt in the blast. Meanwhile, five militants were killed in a bomb explosion in Goshbuk area of Baramula District last evening. Four civilians also sustained injuries in this incident.

Five Killed, 13 Injured in Bomb Blast in Kashmir

BK0412013895 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0035 GMT 4 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In the Kashmir valley, five persons, including two women, were killed and 13

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injured in a powerful bomb blast at the old bus stand in Anantnag town last evening. The condition of the three [as heard] injured is reported to be serious. The bomb which was a time device was planted in a drain. The police have cautioned the people against the evil designs of the militants.

Iran

Daily Comments on Recent 'Shocks' for U.S.

NC0312103895 Mashhad KHORASAN in Persian 21 Nov 95 p 1

[Political commentary: "Six Consecutive Shocks"]

[FBIS Translated Text] During the past two weeks, six consecutive shocks—unprecedented in the past few years—have shaken the U.S. leaders' bases of power.

The first was the political scandal following the rape of a 12- year old Japanese girl by a U.S. serviceman which sparked extensive popular demonstrations in Japan and led to the trial of the serviceman. News on this rapidly spread throughout the world. And in protest to this act, the Japanese demanded that the U.S. forces leave their country.

Then came the extensive demonstrations by the blacks in Washington which inflicted a heavy blow on the social and political body of the United States. The million-strong gathering of blacks, both Muslims and non-Muslims, shouted "God is Great" and protested against oppression, discrimination, and injustice in that country.

Although the officials in Washington tried to downplay the significance of these demonstrations, its repercussions were much vaster for anybody to be able to hide them.

The third shock the United States suffered was the death of Zionist Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin which none of the Clinton administration's officials could have foreseen. Rabin's assassination was a serious blow on the Middle East peace process and proved the crisis and political-factional friction within the Zionist regime.

While Clinton was still dizzy from all this, the fourth shock was inflicted on him from one of his closest friends: the bomb explosion at the U.S. advisers headquarters in the Saudi capital, Riyadh. The end result left at least seven deaths and 60 wounded which is unprecedented in recent years.

Saudi Arabia was considered to be a U.S. safe haven and Washington's strategic ally. But following the Persian Gulf war, which resulted in the permanent presence of more than 35,000 U.S. soldiers on Saudi soil, there became serious disagreements toward their presence in the region. An unknown group calling itself the "Persian Gulf Tigers" claimed responsibility for this explosion. It is said that the political rift within the Al Saud clan is growing more and more each day, with some experts predicting that the Saudi regime will have to carry out a series of reforms within the country's political structure. At any rate, this incident proved that even Saudi Arabia cannot be considered as a safe haven for the Yankees.

The next shock emerged from the power struggle in the United States because of Clinton's views. The U.S. Congress, which is ruled by a Republican majority, did not approve the U.S. budget bill and this led to a fresh crisis within the U.S. Government when more than 800,000 federal government employees were sent home and the government was closed down. Clinton's efforts to gain Congress support to overcome the crisis have not yielded any results until now, even though two rounds of talks have been held.

The sixth shock, which is of greater political significance, was the explosion of a bomb near the headquarters of U.S. servicemen in Tokyo which, in view of the anti-U.S. feelings that prevail in Japanese public opinion, expressed the rage and aversion of the Japanese toward U.S. presence in their country.

These incidents, which came one after the other, inflicted heavy blows on the United States' policymaking machinery and were a manifestation of the instability and insecurity that exist for the United States, both at home and abroad.

Clinton has very clearly realized now that he does not have security and political stability, either at home or abroad. Even his closest allies have become shaky and weak.

Yazdi Welcomes Visit by UN Human Rights Chief

LD0212123795 Tehran IRNA in Persian 0930 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tehran, 2 Dec — Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi, head of the judicial branch, said today that there is no problem whatsoever with the new representative of the UN Commission on Human Rights visiting Iran. Maurice Danby Copithorne, a Canadian, was appointed to the post following the resignation of Glanido Pohl. Copithorne requested a visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran in Mordad [July-August].

Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi said: The judicial branch of the Islamic Republic of Iran previously announced its agreement to Copithorne's visit through the Supreme National Security Council.

The head of the judicial branch expressed the hope that the new representative of the UN Commission on

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Human Rights would formulate his report based on facts.

Egyptian Regime's Handling of Elections Criticized

NC0412072195 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 4 Dec 95

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] On the eve of the second round of parliamentary elections in Egypt on Wednesday [6 December], an independent group monitoring the elections announced yesterday that numerous violations and cases of government influence in favor of ruling party candidates were reported in the first round. According to Egypt's interior minister, in the first round, none of the opposition groups' candidates were elected.

Fifteen people have been killed and 128 wounded in election protests. In parallel with all these, the Wafd Party is studying the possibility of boycotting the second round to protest violations by the ruling party; it is very likely it will not participate in the second round. Earlier, the U.S. State Department, which supports the Egyptian regime, expressed concern at violations in the first round.

The Egyptian Government, which started to crush opposition groups and parties months ago in a bid to ensure victory for the ruling party, intensified its activity on the eve of the elections and thus ruled out free parliamentary elections. The activities of the Muslim Brotherhood Party, one of Egypt's moderate and veteran groups, were banned and most of its candidates who intended to stand on their own were arrested.

In view of its preparations, the Egyptian Government expected the elections to be calm. But under such unequal conditions, various reports emerged of rigging by government officials and the ruling party, and unrest and protests against election procedures spread throughout the country.

The second round of the Egyptian elections to choose 308 of 444 deputies will be held on Wednesday amid doubts about the legitimacy of the outcome, doubts that have already cast their dark shadow over the elections.

Mediating Official Returns From Afghanistan Visit

Opposes Foreign 'Interference'

LD0112194795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto 1230 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic Republic of Iran would not spare any effort in bringing peace in Afghanistan.

Mr. 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi, Iranian deputy foreign minister for Asia and Pacific affairs, who had gone to Afghanistan to continue his endeavors to end the fighting and bloodshed in Afghanistan, has assessed as positive the result of his meeting in Bamian with 'Abdol Karim Khalili, chairman of the Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami [Islamic Unity Party] party's council and members of this council, during an interview with the correspondent of Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Regarding the prospect of peace in Afghanistan, Borujerdi said that the Islamic Republic of Iran was opposing any interference by foreigners in this country's affairs.

In announcing the readiness of the chairman of the Wahdat-e Eslami party's council to find a solution for the current issues of Afghanistan through talks and Khalili's welcoming the message by His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, leader of the Islamic revolution, calling for the end of fighting in Afghanistan, Borujerdi said: All those countries who are somehow involved in the political field of Afghanistan, if they all equally devote their work and efforts in a direction where the belligerent parties sit at one table for talks, one can be hopeful for peace and calmness in this country.

Borujerdi then emphasized the continued Iranian humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan, including the construction of medical clinics and hospitals as well as general program of vaccinating children against disease.

Urges Talks for 'Durable Peace'

LD0212175795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto 1230 GMT 2 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The belligerent parties in Afghanistan do not regard fighting as a solution to the problem in Afghanistan.

According to IRNA, 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi, in stating this point yesterday after his return from Afghanistan, said: The Islamic Republic of Iran is trying to encourage the belligerent parties in Afghanistan to agree on holding talks for a durable peace in this country. He added: As a result of the talks which were held with most of the

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belligerent parties in Afghanistan, they have expressed the point that the mediating countries should seriously take the issue of political talks and oblige the belligerent parties to end the fighting.

Borujerdi said that the war-stricken people of Bamian, in welcoming the historic message of His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Khamene'i, leader of the Islamic revolution, have emphasized that the belligerent parties in Afghanistan, in following this message, should stop the fratricide in Afghanistan.

The Iranian deputy foreign minister for Asia and Pacific has emphasized the continued assistance of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the people of Afghanistan. He said that the humanitarian assistance of Iran to the people of Afghanistan will continue in the future.

Daily Urges Negotiations To End Afghan Conflict

LD0312104395 Tehran IRNA in English 0951 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 3, IRNA — A morning daily criticizing interventions by foreign powers in the Afghan crisis, commented that the Afghan consensus government can be determined by negotiations, not via clashes at the war front.

The English-language daily 'TEHRAN TIMES' in its editorial on Sunday [3 December] wrote, "informed sources in Qandahar, Afghanistan, have revealed that during the past month, logistic activities of specific foreign countries have intensified (via air and land) for supplying sophisticated weapons to a certain Afghan faction. The government seizure of heavy weapons has substantiated the above information."

The paper went on to say, "political observers in Iran regret that such activities would finally culminate in the intensification of the fratricidal war."

"Once again, Afghanistan has turned into a bloodbath," it noted, pointing out that the conflict has raged since Soviet forces withdrew from that country.

It added, "there are two main reasons for this fratricidal war: Recourse to force by different Afghan factions is the main reason for the continuation of the civil war. Interference of foreign countries is another factor responsible for fanning the flames of war."

"Different Afghan factions should have realized by now that force is not a solution to the Afghan problem. If one faction takes control of one province today, another faction will do the same in another province tomorrow. It is a game without end," the editorial continued.

"Unfortunately, some Afghan factions have fallen prey to the conspiracy of foreign powers with vested interests in that country. As a result, those countries have thus far succeeded in pursuing their interests at the cost of Afghanistan's," the daily emphasized.

It also said, "Iran has thus far spared no effort in convincing Afghan factions to lay down their arms. Iranian delegations have been meeting Afghan factions from Herat to Qandahar, and from Feyzabad to Farah. Iran has repeatedly reiterated that the only solution to the crisis is comprehensive negotiation in which all factions can present their views."

The paper added that negotiations can come about based on two conditions: First, that Afghan factions forego parochial interests for the sake of greater national considerations. Secondly, that foreign powers which have been pursuing their own motives at the expense of Afghan national interests, come to their senses and realize that force is not a solution to the crisis.

"If all regional countries realize that negotiations are the only solution, one can hope that within a short time Afghans will see peace, refugees will return to their home and hearth, begin reconstruction of their motherland and will be able to join the mainstream of regional development. Failing this, all regional countries will have to bear the brunt of the civil war in Afghanistan," the editorial concluded.

Velayati Returns From Balkans, Comments on Accord

NC0212072095 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Velayati returned to Tehran this morning after a three-day visit to Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Speaking to the Central News Unit correspondent, Dr. Velayati commented on the draft of the peace accord with Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina and said: In order to eliminate existing problems between the Muslims and the Serbs, the fifth tripartite session of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Greece was held in Sarajevo for the first time. In view of the current sensitive period, such a session can assist in boosting the solidarity of Sarajevo as the government center of the Bosnian Federation.

Dr. Velayati said that establishing political relations between Greece and Bosnia-Herzegovina resulted from this session. He stated: The Bosnian foreign minister requested that the next session which is scheduled to be held in Tehran and will also be held in Sarajevo to coincide with the implementation of the peace accord and withdrawal of forces.

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According to this report, during the Iranian delegation's stay in Sarajevo, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Bosnian Government and the Islamic Republic of Iran. In order to strengthen cultural relations, an agreement was signed for cooperation between the radio and television organizations of the two countries.

Radio on Balkan Visit, Nation's Role

NC0212081395 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 2 Dec 95

[Commentary by News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] Our Foreign Minister Dr. Velayati concluded his official visit to Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia yesterday and returned to Tehran.

This visit is the first by a high-level Iranian delegation to the Balkans since the cease-fire and the signing of the peace agreement known as the Dayton accord. Ostensibly, this accord which was signed by all the warring sides in the Balkans, will play a considerable role in terminating the region's four-year complicated situation.

This accord does not vindicate the rights of the oppressed nation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, but as the Bosnian Government stresses, peace is preferable to the continuation of war. Even though some of the Bosnian Serb leaders expressed doubts regarding the acceptance of the Dayton accord, political experts believe that this accord has been accepted, more or less, by all parties involved.

In the short term, the war has ended on the Balkan peninsula. It is obvious that the cease-fire and the establishment of a durable peace in this area loaded with tension requires the adoption of serious measures and adequate guarantees. With an end to the war, the thoughts of the people of this region, especially of Bosnia- Herzegovina, will turn to the reconstruction of their respective countries.

In the four years of a bloody and devastating war, most of the infrastructural installations and residential areas of Bosnia- Herzegovina have sustained serious damage. Construction and reconstruction of the damage requires international support and Islamic countries, the Islamic Republic of Iran in particular—which provided unstinting support for the Muslim Bosnian nation during the war—have an important role to play. This will be a source of displeasure from the perspective of most governments, especially of the Americans.

Washington, which has openly extended its influence in the Balkans, is not pleased with the warm and fraternal relations between Iran and the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina and will do anything to harm these relations. However, the warm welcome by the Bosnian Government and people for Dr. Velayati and his accompanying delegation, which we witnessed in Croatia as well, indicates that our country's relations with the Republics of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia have brighter prospects ahead than in the past.

The Islamic Republic of Iran's active diplomacy—a manifestation of which was observed in the actions of the Islamic Contact Group, the convocation of a tripartite session with the participation of the Bosnian and Greek Governments, and similar conferences with the participation of the Croatian Government—has affirmed Islamic Iran's goodwill and has boosted our country's position in diplomatic circles.

Dr. Velayati's latest visit to Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia followed by a high-level economic delegation to Bosnia-Herzegovina is evidence that the Islamic Republic of Iran—as it proved during the war—will continue to play an active role in consolidating peace and tranquility on the path of the construction of these two republics, especially Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia.

Nateq-Nuri Continues Visit to Bushehr Province

Opens Gas Refinery

LD0112175595 Tehran IRNA in English 1631 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bushehr, Dec. 1, IRNA — The visiting Majles speaker, 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri on Friday [1 December] opened the second phase of gas refinery of Kangan in this southern city of Kangan.

With the termination of this stage of the project and the coming of refinery into operation, this refinery would produce some 79 million cubic meters of natural gas and 50,000 barrels of liquified gas a day.

The first phase of the refinery went on the stream line in 1989 with capacity of 34 million cubic meters of natural gas.

The capacity of the second phase of the gas refinery of Wali Asr (lord of the time, may God hasten his appearance) is 30,000 barrels of liquid gas in addition to 45 million cubic meters of natural gas.

The first connstruction phase of the gas refinery in Kangan was initiated in 1984 and the second stage of the construction started in 1990.

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Some dlrs. 740 million plus rls. 510.41 billion have been spent on the largest refinery of its kind in the Middle East and which ranks third in the world.

Meanwhile, Hojjat ol-Eslam Nateq-Nuri opened a 42-megawatt gas-powered energy station in Kangan.

The provincial managing-director of electricity distribution company of Bushehr, Khoush Khoulq, said that a 132-kw power grid and a 66-kw generation post have been installed to provide power in the area.

He said the gas-powered energy station has cost rls. 8.20 billion.

Kangan with a population of approximately 70,000, is located in the south of Bushehr.

Derides U.S. Criticism

LD0212132995 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1052 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] During a visit to the south of the country, Majles Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam val Moslemin Nateq-Nuri inspected the Bushehr nuclear power plant. Mr Amrollahi, vice president and head of the Atomic Energy Organization, briefed Mr. Nateq-Nuri and his accompanying delegation, saying: Preliminary studies for the construction of the first unit of the Bushehr nuclear power plant have been completed and an agreement has been signed for its implementation. He said $780 million has been allocated for completion of the unit, and added that $200 million of the allocated sum would be paid in rials.

During his inspection of the Bushehr nuclear power plant, Mr. Nateq-Nuri stressed the need for the completion of the plant and its peaceful use. [passage omitted]

Work on completing the Bushehr power plant is one of the most significant examples of the U.S. defeat in the economic and political isolation of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Since last winter, when an agreement was signed with the Russian Federation for the completion of the plant, the U.S. Administration has tried hard — at the international level and during its talks with Moscow — to cancel the agreement. At an international level, the United States has resorted to ominous and false propaganda, and has said that the Bushehr nuclear power plant makes it possible for Iran to produce nuclear weapons. This is basically not true, as access to nuclear weapons through nuclear power plants is technically not possible. Moreover, the International Atomic Energy Agency has repeatedly and frequently announced that the Iranian nuclear activities are peaceful.

U.S. efforts during talks with Moscow have also been defeated. Many rounds of negotiations between President Clinton and President Yeltsin, during which Clinton insisted that Tehran-Moscow nuclear cooperation should be cancelled, were fruitless, and the Russian Government has repeatedly stressed that it will adhere to its commitments.

The completion of the Bushehr nuclear power plant is significant for the Islamic Republic of Iran for two reasons. First, due to an increase in the world demand for fossil fuels and their harmful effects on the environment, Iran intends to be active in the nuclear energy sphere, and it has already invested in solar and wind- generated power plants. This is one of the most responsible national and international efforts toward the protection of the environment.

Second, Iran considers nuclear energy to be one of humanity's achievements and does not accept U.S. efforts to deprive the people of Iran of the benefits of such a science.

Today, it is clear to everyone that the major use of nuclear science is not in the military sphere, but the peaceful use of nuclear science is increasing on a daily basis.

Says U.S. Stance More 'Irrational'

LD0312104795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Speaking on relations between Iran and the United States in a question and answer session with university students in the southern city of Bushehr, Majles Speaker 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri said yesterday that Iran and the United States could not stand next to each other.

He emphasized that the U.S. approach to Iran was becoming more irrational by the day and now that its economic sanctions against Iran were defeated, the United States was threatening non-U.S. companies about their relations with Iran but that Iran had reached such a degree of progress that such issues could not damage it.

Emphasizing that the European stance must be seen in a different light, Nateq-Nuri said: European countries are not passive partners for the United States and therefore Iran has relations with them. [passage omitted]

In another part of his speech, the head of the legislature emphasizing the active participation of university students on the political scene and in the country's political affairs, and speaking about his trip to the country's provinces said: The trips to the provinces are designed to meet people and to learn about their problems and

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difficulties. These trips are not campaigns for the presidency.

Comments on Rushdie Decree, U.S. Ties

LD0312102195 Tehran IRNA in English 0830 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bushehr, Dec. 3, IRNA — Majles Speaker 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri said here Saturday [2 December] that the late Imam Khomeyni's decree on apostate Salman Rushdie is still valid.

Addressing students of Bushehr university, he reiterated that as it was told to Austrian reporters in his recent visit to that country, the Iranian Government is not to dispatch commandoes to kill the apostate Rushdie.

He stressed that the 15th of Khordad Foundation which set a prize for the killing of Rushdie was a non-governmental charity foundation.

Some countries are pursuing a campaign against the Islamic republic under false pretexts of its alleged support for terrorism, the speaker noted, adding, "we ourselves are a victim of terrorism which is supported in the European countries."

He further stressed on the active participation of university students in the country's political affairs.

Commenting on relations with the United States, he stated that the U.S. has an illogical attitude towards Islamic Iran.

When the U.S. trade embargo against Iran failed, it warned non-American companies against having links with the Islamic republic, the speaker stressed, underlining however that Iran has attained a level of development that could not be harmed by such alleged propaganda.

On relations with European countries, he said that the case of Europe is different from that of the U.S.

The Islamic republic has ties with a number of European states including England, he went on.

As to the country's foreign debt, the speaker announced that the government has no arrears and the schedules have been provided for paying other debts in the future.

Bulgarian Economic Official Pays Visit

Says Willing To Expand Ties

LD0212121695 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Today, Kiril Petrov Tsochev, the Bulgarian deputy prime minister and trade and foreign economic cooperation minister, was received by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. the Bulgarian minister submitted a report on the recent political and economic situation in his country and said: Bulgaria has always maintained its cordial and historical relations with Iran, which is a strategic regional country.

He added: Bulgaria is now willing to enhance the level of bilateral relations, particularly in the economic and trade spheres. He also expressed Bulgaria's wish to purchase Iranian oil products and non-oil goods from Iran, and said that his talks with Iranian officials on the expansion of mutual cooperation in the areas of transport, agriculture, technical, and trade are quite positive.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani welcomed the expansion of relations and cooperations between Iran and Bulgaria, and said: Bearing in mind the two countries' historical ties, there is no limit on the resumption and future expansion of cooperation.

Attends Economic Commission Meeting

LD0212172195 Tehran IRNA in English 1503 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 2, IRNA — The tenth meeting of Tehran-Sofia joint economic commission was held in Tehran on Saturday [2 December].

Iranian minister of roads and transportation, Akbar Torkan and visiting Bulgarian deputy prime minister and minister of trade, Kiril Tsochev were present in the meeting.

Torkan who is the Iranian chairman of the commission stressing the need for expansion of economic and trade relations between the two countries said with with [as received] inauguration of the Mashhad-Sarakhs railway next march, many member countries of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), especially those located in the silk railway direction (stretching from China to the Central Asian states) would be linked to Europe via Iran.

The Iranian minister said a new chapter will be opened in international railway transport and trade and tourism between the East and the West.

Torkan called for setting up an effective mechanism to accelerate payment procedures through opening up of special accounts to settle outstanding financial obligations.

Tsochev for his part voiced his country's readiness to expand relations with Iran in all domains, adding that Iran is given priority in Bulgaria's foreign trade relations.

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The Bulgarian deputy prime minister said Sofia is willing to import 1.5 million tons of crude oil (one million tons of heavy and half a million tons of light crude) and 50,000 tons of apples from Iran as well as non-oil goods such as petrochemicals, pistachios, carpet and leather products.

He said Bulgaria is ready to export 900 second-hand train cars, pharmaceuticals, cigarettes, tobacco, cheese, butter and milk powder to Iran.

On the first day meeting of the joint economic commission, the special committees on transport, ports and shipping, trade and banking affairs, industry and agriculture, oil and gas, studied the grounds for cooperation between the two countries.

Iran has imported dlrs. 12 million worth of goods from Bulgaria in the past eight months and exported four million dollars worth of non-oil merchandize as well as 30,000-45,000 barrels of oil a day to Bulgaria.

The 50-member Bulgarian delegation includes 34 Bulgarian entrepreneurs and representatives of private sectors.

The tenth meeting of Tehran-Sofia joint economic commission is expected to conclude its work on Monday by signing a letter of understanding.

Says 'Keen' To Purchase More Oil

LD0312124695 Tehran IRNA in Persian
1103 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tehran, 3 Dec IRNA — At a meeting on Sunday [3 December] with the Iranian oil minister, the Bulgarian trade minister [Kiril Tsochev] discussed the purchase of oil from Iran and the expansion of bilateral commercial exchanges.

According to the Oil Ministry's public relations office, Kiril Tsochev said at the meeting: Bulgaria, which has so far imported 400,000 tonnes of oil from Iran since the beginning of 1995, is keen to increase the level of oil it purchases from Iran to 2.1 million tonnes in 1996.

The Bulgarian trade minister referred to the decrease in the volume of trade between Iran and Bulgaria in recent years and added that his country wishes to increase the volume of trade between the two countries from $120 million to $500 million.

Iranian Oil Minister Gholam Reza Aqazadeh-Kho'i spoke of the Islamic Republic of Iran's position as OPEC's second top exporter of oil and said: Iran exports 2.6 million barrels per day of oil and it is willing to export oil to Bulgaria within the framework of the existing agreements and new agreements with that country. .

Bulgaria wishes to import oil and non-oil products from Iran and to export cheese and other dairy products, as well as machinery, such as lift trucks, to Iran in exchange.

Signs Agreement To Buy Oil

LD0412115695 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian
1030 GMT 4 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The tenth joint session of Iran and Bulgaria concluded its work today with the signing of an agreement.

On the basis of this agreement which was signed by Mr. [Kiril Petrov] Tsochev, deputy prime minister and minister of trade and foreign economic cooperation of Bulgaria, and our country's Minister of Roads and Transportation [Akbar] Torkan, Bulgaria will purchase over two million tonnes of oil from Iran annually and it will cooperate with the Islamic Republic of Iran in the manufacture of pipelines and transfer of gas from Central Asian countries and Iran, to Europe.

The two countries' industrial companies will also purchase, on a buy-back basis, industrial equipment and parts.

On the basis of the agreement between Iran and Bulgaria, the two countries will cooperate in the fields of the shipbuilding industry, transfer of technology, foodstuffs, tinned and preserved fruit production, and the production of dairy products.

Georgian Deputy Minister Pays Official Visit

Discusses Ties With Velayati

LD0212204795 Tehran IRNA in English
2011 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 2, IRNA — In a meeting here today with Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, Georgian First Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Ukleba thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for supporting his country since its independence and called for continuation of Iranian policies regarding settlement of crises in the Caucasus.

Ukleba also briefed Velayati on the latest political and economic developments in Georgia including the recent presidential elections and adoption of a new constitution, and termed economic ties between Tehran and Tbilisi as expanding.

He said the exchange of presidential visits between the two countries has led to strengthening of bilateral economic ties and the establishment of a direct air-link between Tehran and Tbilisi.

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Velayati in reply called regional cooperation an important factor in reducing tensions and promoting stability, and annouced Iran's readiness to take further steps to help regional states resolve their crises.

Referring to Tehran-Tbilisi relations in different fields, he underlined the need for strengthening of relations between the two countries particularly in the economic area and in regional cooperation.

Towards the end of the meeting the Georgian Foreign Ministry official emphasized on the sensitivity of the Caucasus region, and stressed that regional problems should be resolved by regional states away from the interference of outsiders.

Stresses 'Significance' of Ties

LD0312155795 Tehran IRNA in English
1433 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 3, IRNA — Visiting Georgian deputy foreign minister, Mikhail Ukleba, meeting with deputy head of Iran's Majles foreign policy commission, Mohammad Javad Larijani here Sunday [3 December], stressed that for Georgia relations with Iran is of strategic significance.

He said Georgia can have trades with Asian and European countries via Iran.

Larijani for his part said that three main pillars of favorable growth of economic relations are expansion of communication routes, facilitation and expansion of banking services and guaranteeing of investment and trade by the two countries.

Larijani congratulated the Georgian official on the re-election of Eduard Shevardnadze as Georgia's president and said Iran is willing to have expanded cultural and scientific relations with Georgia.

The Georgian deputy foreign minister invited Larijani to visit Georgia.

Sweden Asks For Familiarization of Central Asia

LD0312173795 Tehran IRNA in English
1516 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 3, IRNA — Head of the Research and Analysis Department at the Swedish Foreign Ministry, Ingvar Carlsson [title as received], in a meeting on Sunday [3 December] with the Deputy Head of the Foreign Policy Commission of Majles, Mohammad Javad Larijani, said his country wants Iranian cooperation in order to become more familiar with the Central Asia.

Larijani told the visiting Swedish official that the success of Europeans in dealing with the Central Asian countries depended on their obtaining sufficient knowledge about and respecting the national and cultural values of the Central Asian countries.

He expressed hope that dialogues between the two countries' foreign ministers could help expand ties between Sweden and the Central Asian countries.

The Iranian parliamentarian also accused the United States of hindering the revival of the national and Islamic identities of the Central Asian countries, a policy which causes tension in the region.

Friday Prayers Held in Qeshm After 4-Year Lull

LD0112204895 Tehran IRNA in Persian
1705 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Qeshm (Hormozgan), IRNA — The politico-religious Friday prayer ceremonies were held in Qeshm (Iranian island in the Persian Gulf near Strait of Hormuz) today after a four-year lull. The prayers were held at Saheb Zaman mosque with the participation of a vast number of the region's God-seeking people.

The new Friday prayer leader of Qeshm, Hojjat ol-Eslam Val Moslemin Seyyed Hoseyn Taqavi, said: Friday prayers were created by the Islamic government and its significance was so great that his holiness Imam 'Ali used to even allow prisoners to take part in them.

Before the start of the prayers, the people of Qeshm welcomed the new Friday prayer leader of the town by sacrificing dozens of sheep and chanting Islamic slogans. [passage omitted]

Academics Support Khamene'i on Cultural Jihad

LD0212225995 Tehran IRNA in English
2233 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 2, IRNA — Over 300 leading academicians today submitted a letter to the leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, announcing their readiness to participate in the cultural, intellectual and political jihad (holy struggle), against the suspicious moves to sow discord between religion and state. The letter expressing support for the leader's recent remarks in relation to universities and higher education centres, said the history of the last seven decades of the country shows that universities and higher education centres were the main targets of Western colonialism aimed at corrupting the youth.

It said the Islamic Revolution in Iran, among its other achievements, transformed the irreligious and secular atmosphere of the universities thanks to the dedicated efforts of the ulema of theological schools and committed university professors.

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"Unfortunately, the call for separation between religion and state in the name of 'professionalism' and 'science' has come from those who possess the least qualifications in either (science and religion) and has been raised at a time when the world is witnessing a return to religion — from Russia to America — and when the enemies have launched an all-out attack especially on the cultural scene to destroy the Islamic revolution," said academicians.

"At this sensitive juncture it is vital to identify this seditious move and to counter it with a sound and principled all- embracing cultural programme," they added.

The letter appealed to the leader of the islamic revolution to help launch a coordinated cultural, intellectual and political movement in order to foil the cultural attack and to fill the intellectual void at universities.

"If this seditious move is not dealt with properly it would raise its head from another direction, it warned.

Islam is a way of life which embraces all aspects of human society including worship, politics and administration, in complete harmony with nature and environment, and the idea of separation between state and religion is frowned upon as a devilish notion.

Radio Urges Universities To Fight 'Enemy Plots'

LD0312151395 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1100 GMT 3 Dec 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] More than 300 faculty members from universities and centers of higher education have sent a letter to his eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the esteemed leader of the revolution, condemning foreign intentions to create discord and propagate antireligious beliefs at universities — and calling for a coordinated and serious cultural and intellectual movement to find a solution to and fight the cultural onslaught, and to fill the intellectual vacuums existing at universities. [passage omitted]

Today the enemy has given a new twist to its battle and has extended it to the domain of culture and to the war against people's religious and revolutionary beliefs. As before, it has chosen the university as a catalyst to create doubts. Of course, the university and the theological school — the two effective factors in social and political movements — have always been the target of the greed of spiteful elements. Furthermore, new issues arising from complicated and ever expanding social needs — which demand their appropriate solutions — have also increased the responsibilities of educational centers — universities and theological schools.

Lecturers and the Ulema should carry out their heavy responsibilities by deepening their intellectual and cultural projects and by filling the vacuum created as the result of insufficient educational and cultural work at universities. Such action would initially strengthen the thought of the young and of the student generation, and would further guarantee their spiritual well-being against the enemy's insinuations.

The responsible and concerned staff of the universities have a duty to fight enemy plots — in the university environment — which aim to create doubts about the position of the clergy and about the constructive and determining role that religion plays in guiding society and establishing healthy relations in the political, social, and economic spheres. In this Islamic country, opposition to the clergy and its struggles, principles, and record spells opposition to the most important element that contributes to the development of culture, creates social identity, and guards the independence of Islamic society.

Editorial Addresses Need for Political Parties

NC0112203495 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 26 Nov 95 p 2

[Editorial: "Political Parties Are Essential in a Dynamic Democracy"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Article 26 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran states: "The formation of parties, societies, political or professional associations, as well as religious societies, whether Islamic or pertaining to one of the recognized religious minorities, is permitted provided they do not violate the principles of independence, freedom, national unity the criteria of Islam or the basis of the Islamic Republic. No one may be prevented from participating in the aforementioned groups, or be compelled to participate in them."

Since the Islamic Republican Party stopped functioning in 1987, successive governments in Islamic Iran have been announcing that formation of political parties is allowed and encouraged.

President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani on Friday [1 December] stressed that the way should be paved for active participation of political parties in Iranian politics. "If parties have a serious presence in our society, the majority party will control the Majles and form the government. As a result strong political parties would create coordination between the government and the Majles," the president underlined.

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Hashemi-Rafsanjani is one of the founding members of the Islamic Republican Party which was one of the strongest parties in our country between 1980 and 1987

Indeed in a dynamic democracy, political parties play a key role. In a country where all political affairs are determined on the basis of referendums it is not possible to stop people from their adherence to different political trends. Hence, political parties can play a crucial role in preparing a healthy atmosphere.

However, political parties should abide by the constitution. The constitution is a national covenant which guarantees national integration. According to the constitution, Vali-ye Faqih [supreme Jurisconsult] is cornerstone of national unity.

In every country there is an institution which is sacred and is considered the final bastion for maintaining national unity. It is the institution of leadership in Iran.

Rights and duties always go together. It is a fundamental right of the people to form political parties. It is the duty of political parties to abide by the constitution.

Officials Acknowledges 17.5% Drop in Exports

LD0212103695 Tehran IRNA in Persian 0703 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kerman, 2 Dec — The managing director of Iran's customs has announced in Kerman that goods to the value of $2.1 billion have been exported during the period from 21 March 1995 to 22 October 1995. Abdol Hoseyn Vahaji said exports dropped by 17.5 percent, compared with the similar period last year.

He predicted that $3.8 billion worth of manufactured goods would be exported up to the end of the current year [20 March 1996].

The managing director of the customs said the drop in exports during the past seven months is because of the government's backing for domestic manufacturers, as well as the control and stabilization of market prices.

Vahaji said the reduction in exports is not a cause for concern, since the aim is to improve the quality and value of exports in order to attract foreign currency into the country.

Bank Governor Says $6 Billion of Debts Repaid

LD0312181995 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 3 Dec 95

[All figures as heard]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Governor of the Central Bank [Mohsen Nurbakhsh] of Iran announced that approximately $6 billion of Iran's 18.8 billion postponed debt repayments have been paid back and the time and manner of the payment of the rest of the debts have been clarified.

Mr. Nurbakhsh announced this news saying: What is called the outstanding debt is about $500 to 600 million, planned to be paid back in 1374 [current Iranian year which began on 21 March].

The governor of the Central Bank, who was speaking today at the meeting of the coordinating council of Iran's investment organizations, emphasized: The solution to the problem of outstanding debts has paved the way for benefitting, once again, from export insurance in countries trading with Iran.

The Central Bank intends to secure the foreign exchange needed for importing primary and secondary industrial products, and to prevent importers from seeking to obtain their short-term credit from the foreign exchange market outside the country.

Nurbakhsh added: The Central Bank has reached an agreement with the countries' main export partners over using the venues for the medium-term 8 to 10-year repayment and in this way, new investment projects will, from the outset, utilize correct and safe investments. He said: $1.8 billion of this money has been used in the current year.

Pakistan

Bhutto Claims Islamic Clerics Using CIA Funds

BK0312132695 Karachi BUSINESS RECORDER in English 1 Dec 95 pp 1, 12

[Report by Sikander Hayat: "Benazir Says CIA Funding Clerics: Warns Against NGO's"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad — Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto on Thursday [30 November] called upon the intelligentsia to side with her in her fight against the clerics, who, she said are funded by the CIA but, paradoxically, want to usher in the "so-called" Islamic Revolution in Pakistan.

She branded the clerics as forces of tyranny drawing inspiration from the late General Mohammad Ziaul Haq, who in turn, she believed was a follower of the "Muslim Brotherhood leader Maududi". In line with Zia's politics the clerics want to change the system and not the government, she added.

The prime minister was delivering her inaugural address at the four-day International Conference of Writers and Intellectuals on Literature, Culture and Democracy. Over 700 delegates from over 100 countries are

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expected to attend this conference, which will cost the national exchequer about Rs [rupees] 100 million.

Benazir said her government does not face intrigue, conspiracy or confrontation from the different organs of the state because these organs are fulfiling their duties according to the Constitution. It is the detractors who want to sow the seeds of discord and disruption, she added.

She said the recently quashed army coup was part of the scheming of these "forces of tyranny". "They were a small group of power hungry adventurers who would have plunged Pakistan into a civil war, destroyed the cream of our armed forces, opened to attack our sensitive military institutions and threatened the security of the unborn children of Pakistan".

She said "these unpious adventurers wanted to throw out the political representatives, branded by them as feudals and traders and bring in the so called clean people". "For clean read corrupt crooks who would have sold their soul for political power without political legitimacy", she added.

She said the irony is that these clerics call the present government "American agents" and "disbelievers", but the fact is that the "real Western agents are these so-called clerics toting their guns bought with CIA funds and running their organiations by the CIA money given for the Jihad in Afghanistan". They have not given up in their ambitions to discredit the Quaide Azam's [Jinnah's] dream of a liberal democratic state, she claimed.

Benazir said the West-funded NGOs [nongovernmental organizations] are responsible for harbouring and training terrorists like Ramzi Yusuf. "So next time you are asked to donate to a noble charity ask for the audit reports", she advised the donor countries' ambassadors, a number of whom were present.

The prime minister said if the Arabs, who came here during the days of the Afghan Jihad, are against their governments they should go back and fight in their own countries. "Instead, like cowards, they hide in Pakistan while plotting against their countries".

The recent bombing of the Egyptian Embassy, the prime minister said has enraged the people of Pakistan. We do not expect our guests to abuse our hospitality, she added.

Bhutto said democracy in the Muslim world and the Third World is pitted against dictatorships but the West betrays a lack of concern for global issues such as freedom in Kashmir and debt relief and cultural domination thus adding fuel to a combustible mixture. Western intellectuals she said are suffering from an imaginary confrontation between Islam and Christianity, she added.

Tracing the history of civilisational developments, Benazir Bhutto said the 20th century experienced the denial of individual's freedom on an unprecedented scale under Nazism and Stalinism. Democracy may not be a perfect form of government it is still the "most satisfactory", she added.

Earlier, the host of the conference Fakhar Zaman, said the Benazir Bhutto government had always attached great importance to literature and culture, because a democratic culture is a tolerant culture.

Minister: Egyptian Embassy Bomb Suspect Arrested

BK0312165795 Hong Kong AFP in English 1654 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Dec 3 (AFP) — Pakistani investigators have arrested a man who is believed to have financed the bombing that destroyed the Egyptian Embassy here last month, Interior Minister Nasirullah Babar said Sunday [3 December].

He said the man, whom he did not identify, was arrested on the frontier with Afghanistan, indicating he may have been trying to slip across the border.

The minister, who made the disclosure in the National Assembly, did not say when the arrest was made nor gave other details.

Officials later described the arrest a breakthrough in the probe into the November 19 blast that killed 17 people and injured 60.

The minister also said the authorities were trying to identify a victim of the bombing whose maimed body is lying at a mortuary in Islamabad.

The investigation is being assisted by experts from Egypt and the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Babar said the FBI team was here only for the "limited" purpose of investigating the explosives used in the bombing.

"They are sending the evidence regarding the explosive to the United States for analysis because in Pakistan we do not have the necessary expertise," he said.

Further on Minister's Remarks on Arrest

BK0412083695 Islamabad THE NATION in English 4 Dec 95 pp 1, 4

[Report by Imran Munir]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad — Interior Minister Nasirullah Babar informed the National Assembly on

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Sunday [3 December] that the authorities investigating the Egyptian Embassy blast had arrested a man who 'probably financed' the attack.

Listing out the details of the progress of the on-going investigation of the bombing, Babar said, "It is a major breakthrough in the case. The arrest of this financier will lead to solution of the case". The Minister did not give any further details regarding the nationality of the alleged financer except saying," We have rounded him up today while he returned from Afghanistan".

He said according to the finding of the investigation team, two men carried out the operation and one of them was a suicide bomber, adding: "The suicide bomber blew up with the vehicle carrying the explosive while body the other accomplice of the bomber suicide is laying in the city mortuary. We are trying hard to establish the identity of this unidentified body".

About the American FBI men who came here to investigate the bombing incident Babar said the Federal Bureau of Investigation men are here only to investigate the explosive used in the Egyptian Embassy bombing and "They are invited for a limited purpose and they are sending the evidence of material used in the explosive to America for analysis because Pakistan had no such facility to examine the explosive".

The Opposition members who gave tough time to the Interior Minister and demanded his resignation while he was responding to the call attention notice about the Egyptian Embassy blast, Babar lost his temper and said "I have taken the responsibility from day one and had my resignation helped in the investigation I could have resigned without your asking. You can not stop a suicide bomber". [sentence as published]

To another query, he said the authorities had beefed up security in the Capital and "I could even go to the extent of getting your car boots checked but then you will start complaining". Meanwhile, Babar took another twist from his initial stand that "Islamic University is a hub of terrorism" by saying "It was up to the government to decide the fate of the university because it was a seat of learning serving a cause of Pakistan and Islam on the international level". But when the Opposition kept on reminding him his initial stance, Babar said "My earlier remarks were based on a string of incidents like the arrest of Ramzi Yusuf and others".

Earlier, the Opposition raised a privileged motion regarding the baton charge of Lahore police on PML [Pakistan Muslim League] women rally in which MNA [Member of National Assembly] Tehmina Daultana was wounded seriously. The Interior Minister did not oppose the motion.

Tehmima, who came in the House on a wheel chair with bandages, narrated the details of the incident and said that she was leading a demonstration of the women against the price hike when local police attacked her with butts and batons. She said the AC [Assistant Commisioner] who was supervising the police operation pointed at her saying "strip her".

She regretted the attitude of the Speaker saying, "I was expecting a phone call from you but you did not bother to call me. One phone call will not frighten you from the Prime Minister.

She also claimed that the system is about to collapse and this is the last session of the assembly.

Speaking next, Iftikhar Gillani lashed out at the undemocratic attitude of the government and said there was no need to refer the matter to privilege committee because the parliament can convict the responsible officers. He said there is no value of these committees as one of the committees summoned the DG APP [Director General — Associated Press of Pakistan] who refused to come saying, "He has no time".

He said the ruling party is dishonest and the PM [prime minister] herself is contributing to degrade the parliament.

Khawaja Asif delivered an impressive speech and targeted the economic policies of the government, military role and bureaucrats. He was particularly very harsh towards the army who according to him ruled the country for 25 years and now they are ruling through a remote control, adding "Look at them they are hunting partridges on Puma combat helicopter". He emphasised the need to protect the democracy and the parliament.

Asfandyar Wali and M Humza also spoke and condemned the police attack on Tehmina.

Ministerial Commission With Egypt To Meet 13 Dec

BK3011141695 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 30 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The first meeting of Pak-Egypt Joint Ministerial Commission will be held in Cairo from 13th of next month. Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali will lead Pakistan's delegation to the meeting. A number of proposals to strengthen the existing economic cooperation between the two countries will come up for discussion in the meeting. During the stay in Cairo, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali will hold meetings with President Husni Mubarak and Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and will hold consultation on various bilateral and regional issues and mutual

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concerns. The matters relating to the bomb blast in the Egyptian Embassy in Islamabad will also come under discussion.

Three Killed, 14 Injured in Lahore Bomb Blast

BK0112122595 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1200 GMT 1 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Three people were killed and 14 injured when a bomb ripped through a Multan-bound bus at the Badami Bagh bus stand in Lahore this afternoon. The injured have been admitted to Mayo Hospital. The deputy inspector general of police, Lahore Range, told the Radio Pakistan's Lahore correspondent that a committee has been set up to investigate the incident and to arrest the criminals.

Strike Called by Altaf Group Observed in Karachi

BK0312133695 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Partial strike was observed in Karachi today on the call given by Altaf Group. Traffic was seen plying on a number of main thoroughfares, although the frequency of public transport was less than that on normal days, but taxies, rickshaws, motorcycles, cars, and other modes of private transport was seen in large number. Most of the shops and commercial establishments in District South and East remained open and brisk activities were witnessed in the morning and during the later part of the day. In some areas petrol pumps, offices, and schools also remained open and normal activities were witnessed there. A large number of people were seen busy in their normal routine of buying and selling. District Central and some parts of District West, however, remained closed and traffic in these areas was very thin. Normal life in these areas was disturbed because of nonavailability of transport and closure of shops and business centers.

Sri Lanka

Government Troops Advance Toward, Capture Jaffna

'Official Reports' Describe Fighting

BK0212090195 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 2 Dec 95

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Official reports said around 5.30 a.m. [0000 GMT] yesterday, a column of troops had moved towards Jaffna town from Mandaitivu island and intercepted and destroyed a boat, killing 15 terrorists on board. "As a result of retaliation by the Tigers, one soldier was killed and two wounded," the report said.

A senior military spokesman said at the time of the attack, troops were occupying Chirutivu island, located between Jaffna town and Mandaitivu. "The terrorists were attempting to flee southwards from Jaffna town when the troops engaged them", the spokesman said.

Security reports said the terrorists resisted the advancing troops from the direction of Navalar Road within Jaffna city. "They fired machine guns, RPGs, mortars and small arms from well-prepared positions. However, troops cleared many booby traps and continued their advance", reports said.

The LTTE's [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] clandestine Voice of Tigers radio yesterday admitted for the first time that Jaffna would soon fall to the security forces.

"Jaffna will fall very soon," the rebel radio announced, adding that the army was using heavy weapons and battle tanks to advance further into the heart of the war-torn town.

It said the Tigers were offering "heavy resistance" to the army advance and reported fierce fighting in several areas of Jaffna.

Hundreds of rebels, including several suicide squad members, are believed to be trapped inside the city centre with no way out. Tiger supply lines have been cut off by troops who captured several land routes.

"They are appealing for reinforcements, ammunition and medical help," defence sources said.

According to military estimates, more than 1,700 Tigers have been killed during the offensive which began on October 17, when thousands of heavily armed infantrymen from two divisions of the army broke out of the Forward Defended Localities (FDLs) of the Palaly military complex and moved southwards towards Jaffna.

They have captured a number of strategic towns and LTTE installations on the way, including Navakkeri, Achchelu, Achchuveli, Urelu, Urumpirai and Neerveli. These included sprawling training camps, underground hospitals and command posts and the palatial residence of Velupillai Prabhakaran at Nallur.

Further on Fighting, Casualties

BK0212091395 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0830 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, 2 Dec (LANKAPUVATH) — At least 80 LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists and 27 soldiers were killed Friday [1 December] as government troops of Operation 'Riviresa' (sunshine) were closing in on the Jaffna city centre amidst heavy enemy resistance.

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Operational Headquarters of the Ministry of Defence said the Tigers occupying well-prepared defence lines with concrete bunkers in the built up area with narrow lanes and alleys, engaged the security forces with small arms and rocket-propelled grenades at close range, inflicting casualties which resulted in a slow and difficult advance.

The terrorists had also made use of natural obstacles such as canals and drains to engage the oncoming troops. Rows of houses and boundary walls were prepared for demolition and were exploded as the troops entered the buildings.

By late afternoon, with determination to overcome enemy resistance and capture ground, the troops were able to break through the defences held by the terrorists along the Navalar Road, and pushed further southwestwards.

Another column of troops advanced northwestwards from Colombuthurai and were able to advance beyond the Old Park Road towards the Public Works Department office in the Jaffna town.

During the day's fighting, one officer and 26 soldiers were killed in action and four officers and 72 others injured.

Bodies of dead terrorists were left behind in buildings and a body count was not possible due to booby traps and improvised explosive devices. However, ground troops have estimated that a minimum of 80 Tigers were killed and over 100 injured.

Troops Capture Jaffna Fort Area

BK0212100595 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0950 GMT 2 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, 2 Dec (LANKAPUVATH) — Government troops of Operation 'Riviresa' (sunshine) Saturday [2 December] captured the Jaffna Fort area while the city centre has been completely sealed off by them.

Operational Headquarters of the Ministry of Defence said the trapped LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists will have to either surrender or commit suicide.

A column of troops advancing from the northern direction captured the fort area including the Pannai Causeway around 1030 hours, easily overcoming Tiger resistance.

Further on Capture of Jaffna Fort

BK0312092595 Colombo SUNDAY OBSERVER in English 3 Dec 95

[Report by Ramani Kangaraarachchi — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Operation 'Riviresa' [sunshine] troops yesterday completed their "Long March" to Jaffna by capturing the Jaffna Fort and penetrating the heart of the city. Forward units of the two Army columns, one advancing from the North and the other from the South-eastern suburb of Columbuthutai, linked up in the central area completely sealing off the city centre, according to Defence sources.

"The military offensive is complete," Defence spokesman Brigadier Sarath Munasinghe told the 'Sunday Observer'. "There are a few areas in the centre where we have to flush out the remaining LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] cadres who are holed up there. This we expect to do in the next couple of days," he said.

The re-capture of the Pannai causeway and the Dutch fort by yesterday morning resulted in the complete encirclement of a small pocket of area in the city centre. "Now we have only to carry out a mopping up in this area and clear it of mines to enable safe movement," the spokesman said.

A Defence Ministry communique issued earlier yesterday said that troops were closing in on the city centre "amidst heavy resistance".

"The advance was slow and difficult due to enemy resistance and the built-up area with narrow lanes and alleys," the communique said. The Army's tanks and infantry fighting vehicles "could not be effectively used" due to the narrow confines of the built-up area. The infantry advanced with fire support from mortars and artillery.

Army casualties as at yesterday morning amounted to one officer and 26 other ranks killed and four officers and 72 wounded. The LTTE casualties were estimated at a minimum of 80 rebels killed and over 100 wounded.

Spokesman on Army's 'Stranglehold'

BK0312091595 Hong Kong AFP in English 0904 GMT 3 Dec 95

[By Amal Jayasinghe]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Colombo, Dec 3 (AFP) — Sri Lankan troops on Sunday [3 December] hunted Tamil Tiger guerrillas in the rebel stronghold of Jaffna

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which came under government control for the first time in a decade, the military said.

Soldiers searched for booby trapped explosives at key points in the centre of Jaffna, capital of a huge de facto state the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has run since 1990.

"We have a stranglehold on Jaffna now," chief military spokesman Sarath Munasinghe asserted. "There may be some Tigers trapped inside, but they can't leave. We are going after them."

Troops on Sunday took control over Jaffna's main bus station, the region's largest hospital and an imposing clock tower in the centre of the town and nearby buildings of the old government secretariat, military officials said.

Thousands of Sri Lankan troops took control of Jaffna Fort, built by Dutch colonists 400 years ago, on Saturday giving them control of the town, 47 days after the huge offensive to smash the parallel administration maintained by the LTTE.

"There are still a lot of IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices) in houses and buildings and we are clearing them," Munasinghe added. "An army tractor was hit by a mine and a soldier died instantly."

Munasinghe said six soldiers had been killed and 20 wounded since the fort's fall.

Tiger resistance died down overnight, Munasinghe said, adding at least 400 Tamil civilians who did not join a mass exodus and had taken refuge in a church and a school were being looked after by the army.

Defence sources said all of Jaffna town was now in the hands of the Sri Lankan military for the first time since 1985, and a formal announcement of the long-expected victory would be made soon.

Saturday's dramatic success cost the death of 508 soldiers and 1,925 guerrillas in the army push which also left thousands of civilians homeless. There is a nationwide alert for Tiger revenge attacks.

Deputy Defence Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte, who led the offensive, said the capture of Jaffna would not end the military drive.

"It will not be the end of the operation," he said. "In our quest for peace, this is only a symbol. This is territory that was not been under our control for over 10 years."

The former Jaffna Fort, razed by the Tigers in 1990 after hundreds of soldiers were evacuated from there to escape an LTTE siege, was captured after fierce fighting which left at least 35 soldiers and 80 rebels dead.

The star-shaped fort has been a symbol of dominance over Jaffna, the fountainhead of the Tamil separatist campaign which has left more than 50,000 people dead over two decades.

The fall of Jaffna shattered the LTTE's image of invincibility, but the guerrillas have vowed to pursue their fight for an independent state. [passage omitted]

Radio on Fighting, LTTE Indian 'Threats'

BK0312121095 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Troops of Operation Riviresa [sunshine] have advanced southwestwards from Ariyakulam areas by passing Jaffna Hospital and the Jaffna Fort areas yesterday. Troops were initially fired upon from southwest but subsequently there was no resistance. Troops cleared areas residency Kachcheri, Guru Nagar and St. Mary's Church within the Jaffna town. There are about 400 civilians in St. Patrick's College, St. Mary's Church, and the seminary. The urgent needs of civilians are being provided by the Army. According to ground troops, civilians who have stayed behind in Jaffna are jubilant over the arrival of the security forces. Operational Headquarters told the SLBC that the troops came across a large number of improvised explosive devices and mines. A tractor carrying Army personnel was caught up in a land mine explosion, injuring one officer and five soldiers. The driver of the tractor was killed. Total casualties during the day was six soldiers killed in action and two officers and 18 soldiers wounded.

Further clearing of the Jaffna city center commenced this morning. At present, troops are in the process of clearing the Jaffna Teaching Hospital and the bus stand areas, a release received from the Operational Headquarters a short while ago said.

Jaffna residents reaching Colombo this week told LANKAPUVATH that they had been forced out of their houses by the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists, although they did not want to do so. Some of the residents who were the last to leave Jaffna said that when they had refused to leave their homes, the Tigers had come at night and fired at their houses. They said that Sri Lankan security forces were well disciplined and the soldiers had taken extra care to avoid civilian casualties and to ensure their safety while providing food and shelter.

They said that the troops had also taken great care to avoid causing any damage to places of worship, although the terrorists had fired at oncoming troops of Operation Riviresa from within Hindu kovil [temple]

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premises. An example was the Khandaswami Kovil at Nallur, where the troops had held their fire despite the terrorists firing from inside the kovil premises. The Jaffna residents, citing another instance, said that the LTTE had launched a heavy barrage of mortars and rocket-propelled grenade at the troops from within the terrorist cemetery at Koppai, where dead LTTE cadres were laid in cement coffins. The troops had been forced to fire heavy artillery in retaliation at the terrorists. The Jaffna civilians described the exchange of fire as being very heavy in a (?virulent) battle which lasted for several hours.

Deputy Defense Minister Colonel Anuruddha Ratwatte says that civil administration will be restored in the north in the next few days once the military victory over terrorism has been completed. He said that the development of liberated areas would begin next year so as to guarantee prosperity to all Sri Lankans. Col. Ratwatte said that a special program would be launched to renovate damaged irrigation schemes in the north and the east. Such a program would require foreign assistance. The minister stressed, however, that the peace-loving people of these areas would definitely be provided with all necessary irrigation facilities.

All Indian states were placed on a security alert yesterday following threats from the LTTE. The Home Ministry issued a special circular last night ordering the alert. Indian police have warned that the terrorists are planning violence in different parts of India. They also said that Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao is in great danger. Indian missions have been ordered not to allow any Sri Lankan into the country without thorough investigation.

Troops Capture Jaffna

BK0412023995 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 4 Dec 95

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sri Lankan Troops retake Jaffna after a lapse of five years. Troops had begun mopping up pockets of LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] resistance after taking the Jaffna Fort area. "Now that we have completely sealed off the Jaffna city centre, terrorists holed up there will have to either surrender or bite the cyanide capsule," a military spokesman said.

Troops closing in on the city centre, slowly but inexorably, were busy clearing the Jaffna teaching hospital and the bus stand areas Sunday [3 December] morning.

Operation Riveresa (Sunshine) troops who virtually liberated the Tiger domain of Jaffna city with the capture of the Fort area on Saturday morning were given a rousing welcome by about 400 Tamil civilians who had stayed back defying Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) leader Prabhakaran's orders to evacuate, reports reaching Colombo said on Sunday.

The column of troops that advanced South West after taking Ariyakulam had already cleared Kachcheri, Gurunagar, and St. Mary's Church within the Jaffna city when they were hailed by civilians. The soldiers lost no time in attending to the urgent needs of these civilians who had taken refuge in St. Patrick's College, St. Mary's College and the seminary, Defence Ministry sources said.

A column of troops advancing from the Northern direction captured Jaffna Fort area including the Pannai causeway about 10.30 am on Saturday. Another column moving North West from the coastal area of Columbuturai linked up with the former at the Jaffna Fort area.

A senior military officer said soldiers hoisted lion flags and regimental flags inside the Fort area as well as in all other areas regained by the army to mark the end of LTTE dominance of Jaffna. "Today, Lion flags and army regimental flags fly in many parts of Jaffna's Valikamam division, signifying that we have routed the LTTE in those areas."

The military held the Jaffna Fort from the beginning of the Eelam war and vacated it in mid-1990 for strategic reasons. The Pannai causeway provided access to troops when they were occupying the Dutch-built Fort, which the LTTE later razed.

Troops had begun mopping up pockets of LTTE resistance after taking the Fort area. "Now that we have completely sealed off the Jaffna city centre, terrorists holed up there will have to either surrender or bite the cyanide capsule," a military spokesman said on Saturday.

Troops closing in on the city centre, slowly but inexorably, were busy clearing the Jaffna teaching hospital and the bus stand areas Sunday morning.

Rebels continued to engage the advancing troops with small arms and RPGs [rocket propelled grenades] at close range from well prepared defence lines in the built up area. Narrow lanes and alleys too had hampered the progress of troops. Tigers engaging the troops also had the advantage of being able to change position darting from cover to cover in their familiar terrain, the spokesman explained.

LTTE cadres also had made use of natural obstacles such as canals and drains to engage the marching troops. "Armour could not be used effectively due to

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the closeness of the built up area. The infantrymen, however, marched on, supported by artillery and mortar fire," he explained.

The national news agency LANKAPUVATH yesterday quoted Jaffna residents reaching Colombo as saying that the security forces were well disciplined and the soldiers had taken extra care to avoid civilian casualties and ensure their safety, while providing them with food and shelter.

According to LANKAPUVATH, Jaffna residents had praised the troops for taking care to avoid damage to places of religious worship. "An example was the Kandasamy Kovil at Nallur where the troops had held fire despite the rebels firing from inside the kovil [Hindu temple] premises," the residents had told the news agency.

Fighting on Saturday left six soldiers dead and two officers and 18 soldiers injured. Tigers had suffered much heavier casualties.

Nearly 400 soldiers lost their lives in the operation, now in its 48th day. Military estimates put the Tiger death toll at over 1,900. Over 3,000 Tiger cadres are believed to have been seriously injured.

General: Tiger Chiefs Flee From Jaffna

BK0412072695 Hong Kong AFP in English 0707 GMT 4 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] COLOMBO, Dec 4 (AFP) — Tamil Tiger leaders have fled Jaffna, leaving their inexperienced young cadres to face a house-to-house search Monday [4 December] by victorious government troops in the recaptured rebel stronghold, a military leader said.

Fighting had died down in Jaffna and the rest of northern Sri Lanka, as the soldiers began the difficult house-to-house hunt for surviving Tamil Tiger guerrillas and explosives, the military said.

"It is all quiet after a long time," a military official said Monday, two days after the Sri Lankan army captured the former rebel stronghold of Jaffna on the 47th day of the country's biggest military offensive.

Meanwhile, a military commander said, in remarks published here Monday, that leaders of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) had fled Jaffna town and left behind only "inexperienced young cadres."

"The LTTE leaders have fled," Major General Rohan Daluwatte told The Island newspaper, the LTTE had retreated and the remaining inexperienced cadres "have been cornered by the Sri Lankan troops."

"We are now consolidating our positions," he added.

Military officials here said soldiers were going through buildings in the practically deserted, but heavily-built, town looking for surviving or wounded LTTE fighters and hidden explosives and weapons.

"The town is fully under our control," an official said.

"Clearing of Jaffna city centre is on", an official statement added.

On Sunday, the army raised the Sri Lankan flag at the former Dutch-built Jaffna Fort for the first time since the LTTE took over the sprawling region in 1990 to form a de facto state in the country's north.

The officials said fighting between the Tigers and troops had died down, but not before the deaths of nearly 2,500 people on both sides since the start of the Sri Lankan military drive on October 17.

The army and LTTE fought ferocious street battles throughout last week as the soldiers inched their way into the heart of Jaffna, their pace at times reduced to a crawl because of vast mine fields and booby-trapped buildings.

The LTTE have reportedly rigged scores of houses in Jaffna town with explosives. Several of the buildings came crashing down on the advancing troops.

"The security forces have secured a major victory for a lasting peace," a Sri Lankan minister said Sunday, in the first official reaction to Jaffna's fall which has pierced the LTTE's image of invincibility.

Housing Minister Nimal Siripala de Silva also called for volunteers to help implement a massive rehabilitation programme in Jaffna, where many buildings were destroyed in nearly 50 days of fighting.

Tens of thousands of Tamils fled Jaffna in the wake of the army offensive and are living as refugees in overcrowded camps in the south of Jaffna peninsula and on the northern mainland, most of which is held by the Tigers.

President Chandrika Kumaratunga — for whom the Jaffna battle have become a matter of prestige after the Tigers abrubtly pulled out of peace talks in April ending a six-month truce — has not yet commented on the decisive military victory.

LTTE founder-leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, the country's most wanted man, has, however, vowed to fight on and said there could be no return to talks as long as Jaffna remained under Colombo's control.

Jaffna town was the capital of the LTTE's de facto state, and Tamil and military analysts have called its fall a

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serious blow to the group. But thousands of its guerrillas escaped the army dragnet to continue the war.

The LTTE had an estimated 10,000-15,000 fighters when the October offensive began. It is a heavily armed group and is believed to possess missiles, and has a dare-devil navy which specialises in suicide attacks.

'Powerful Blast' Destroys Government Building

BK0412084695 Hong Kong AFP in English
0832 GMT 4 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] COLOMBO, Dec 4 (AFP) — A powerful blast devastated the main government building in Sri Lanka's northern Jaffna town Monday [4 December] as troops were clearing mines planted by Tamil Tiger rebels, official sources here said.

The explosion ripped through the two-storey former Jaffna District Secretariat building, killing or wounding several soldiers, oficial sources said.

The explosion came two days after security forces captured Jaffna town, which had been the capital of a de facto state run in the island's north by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

LTTE Chief Calls For Tamil Youths To Join War

BK0312081295 Hong Kong AFP in English
0516 GMT 3 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, Dec 3 (AFP) — Sri Lankan Tamil Tiger chief Velupillai Prabhakaran has called on Tamil youths to join separatist war he is leading in the country.

Prabhakaran said in a statement released by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) that increasing the rebel movement's military power "has become the inevitable historical necessity today.

"This is crucial for the survival of the Tamil nation," he said in a message released on November 27 to mark the LTTE's "Martyrs' Day."

"Our nation has been forced into a necessity to struggle for survival," he said. "The young generation of Tamils cannot escape from this national duty, from this call of history.

"Any delay in this task will endanger the existence of our nation," he added. "Therefore, I call upon the younger generation to join our liberation movement without delay.

"The earlier the youth join our movement, the quicker we can achieve the objectives of our struggle," the Tiger supremo said in his statement, parts of which were published last week.

The full statement came out as Sri Lankan troops took control of the LTTE stronghold of Jaffna in the island's north after a 47 day offensive which left nearly 2,500 dead on both sides.

The military said they now dominated Jaffna town although pockets of rebel resistance remained.

Prabhakaran's statement said Colombo was trying "to determine the political destiny of the Tamils on the basis of military power."

He added: "To frustrate this government's scheme and to advance our liberation struggle, we are left with only one alternative. We have to strengthen our military structure and intensify our struggle.

"It is only by strengthening the military power the Tamils could freely determine their political destiny," he said.

"It is only by strengthening our military power we could live with security, we could gain our lost territories, we could return to our homes as free men," Prabhakaran added.

The LTTE has lost much of the northern peninsula of Jaffna since Sri Lanka mounted its military campaign on October 17 in reply to the rebel decision to call off six months of peace talks in April.

Tens of thousands of Tamils have fled Jaffna to become refugees in the southern part of the peninsula and in the rebel-held Sri Lankan mainland in the north. Jaffna is now a ghost town.

The LTTE's fighting strength was estimated at between 10,000- 15,000 in October. Tamil sources say Prabhakaran may be hoping to boost it by five times.

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